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Latest Light  
on  
Abraham Lincoln







LINCOLN IN 1856

From a photograph copy of an ambrotype taken by McMasters at Princeton, Illinois, July 4, 1856. The only picture of Lincoln known to have been taken during that year. Photograph presented the author by Mrs. W. E. McVay, Los Angeles, California.

(See page 66.)

# Latest Light on Abraham Lincoln *and War-time Memories*

Including many Heretofore Unpublished Incidents and  
Historical Facts concerning his Ancestry, Boy-  
hood, Family, Religion, Public Life,  
Trials and Triumphs

ILLUSTRATED

With many Reproductions from Original Paintings,  
Photographs, etc.

BY

ERVIN CHAPMAN, D.D., LL.D.

*Author of "A Stainless Flag," "Particeps Criminis,"  
"The Czolgosz of Trade and Commerce," etc.*

WITH INTRODUCTION BY  
BISHOP JOHN W. HAMILTON



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TO MY WIFE  
Adelia Haymaker  
AND OUR FIVE CHILDREN  
Flora, Mead, Sylvia,  
Dell and Ervin



"Let American High Schools teach at least one year of Lincoln. Teaching the use of the English language is one of the prime objects of public school instruction. Lincoln was one of the masters of English. His simple, luminous sentences, which go as straight as bullets are models for the pupil which cannot be improved upon. School instruction seeks to form and strengthen a pupil's reasoning powers. To follow Lincoln's mind through his great controversies is an education in reasoning that no classical example can surpass.

"It is high time he became a staple of American education. His collected writings and speeches not only contain the soul of the American story but are highly worth reading simply as literature—as the picture of a mind slowly evolving out of apparent common-place into supreme greatness, and so leading a people through a great crisis."

—JUDGE R. M. WANAMAKER.



## INTRODUCTION

By BISHOP JOHN W. HAMILTON, D.D., LL.D.

*Chancellor American University, Washington, D. C.*

**A**NOTHER Life of Abraham Lincoln? No, not a biography, but the latest authentic information relative to many features of his life in which the world is deeply interested. Such information is always in demand and at this time it is peculiarly welcome. In our own country Abraham Lincoln is today held in higher esteem than ever before, and public interest in his life and in all for which he is known to have contended, is constantly increasing. In public schools and institutions of higher education, in organizations for literary culture and pursuits, on the lecture platform and in the pulpit, Lincoln's name is heard more frequently and with greater interest than is that of any other American. And scarcely less interesting or potential is his name in other lands.

The world has set its halo about him for what it already knows of him but that only increases the desire to know more. And Doctor Ervin Chapman has responded to that desire by producing a work in which there is a great fund of information concerning Lincoln never before published. He has been able to do this because of his intimate knowledge of the workings of the general government and his close and prolonged acquaintance and association with eminent men during Lincoln's administration. He is, therefore, able to write with authority and has done so in a manner so illuminating and instructive as to win for himself a well accredited distinction among all who have written about Lincoln and the times in which he lived.

Doctor Chapman's eminent service during his long life devoted so fully to the progressive and memorable achieve-

ments of those historical and turbulent times, gives him superior qualifications to write with deepest sympathy and friendliness. Sympathy rules the world, the world of Letters as well as the world of Life. A friend will show himself friendly. A foe cannot conceal his enmity. Other things being equal the friend is more reliable than the foe, more popular surely. There are a hundred readers of Abbott's "Life of Napoleon" to one who reads the life by Scott. Because of his deep sympathy with all that distinguished the life of Abraham Lincoln the author has here given us a work in the perusal of which one can hear the heart throbs of the writer. Good news can never come too often and this is a book of good news which we will never tire of reading. It tells us what we always believed was true about Lincoln and the proofs are so conclusive that no misleading myths or legends will hereafter be given credence.

I commend to every reader the author's impassionate appeal for the aid of the platform, pulpit and press in repeating the entrancing story of the humble but hallowed home and family from which this great servant and messenger of God came to save the nation and to redeem a race. I have known Doctor Chapman for many years and have ever held him in high esteem. I have rejoiced in his great work on the Pacific Coast and throughout the nation, and have often announced my conviction that of all men I have known he was the best adapted to the work of reform in which he was such an able and successful leader. I rejoice that he has lived to complete the great work on Abraham Lincoln which he has been for so many years engaged in producing. It will undoubtedly prove the crowning work of his remarkable life. He has given abundant evidence of his fitness to write of the important matters with which he is familiar. He has added a valuable contribution to the political history of the nation and I am pleased to present my venerable friend of many years to my many friends of many lands.

J. W. H.

## FOREWORD

**I**T is indeed a special providence that a unique man like Dr. Ervin Chapman should just at this time of great emergency give to the world a work on Abraham Lincoln, in the preparation of which he has been engaged for more than half a century.

Of "Particeps Criminis," "Bob" Burdette said, "Doctor Chapman is the only man who could write this book," and the same is true of the "Latest Light on Abraham Lincoln and War-time Memories." No one but this "Statesman-Preacher," as he is called, could so successfully have supplemented the three thousand Lincoln publications that have appeared, with a work that is unlike all that has been written concerning Abraham Lincoln.

From boyhood Doctor Chapman has been engaged in literary pursuits and his writings have always been distinguished for their fascinating originality. His books entitled, "A Stainless Flag," "The Czolgosz of Trade and Commerce," and "Particeps Criminis," have been widely and eagerly read. At sixteen he was on the lecture platform. At eighteen he was active in the organization of the Republican party and took the stump for Fremont, and at twenty-two he made one hundred speeches for the election of Abraham Lincoln as President. When but a lad he could repeat from memory the greater part of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution of the United States. "Jefferson's Letters," the "Madison Papers," "The Federalist," "Benton's Thirty Years' View," and "Democracy in America," were his delight while still in his teens and those works are yet in his possession with his original annotations. I have been thrilled with interest as I have handled those old, well-worn but well-preserved volumes, in the perusal of which

this studious country boy unconsciously prepared for the great work he was destined to accomplish. The knowledge of the fundamental principles of civil government acquired by the study of such great books gave strength and imagination to the fervid eloquence of the "Boy Orator," as he was then called. He was brought into close association with the most distinguished men of the nation, and after the election of Lincoln as President he was called to Washington to fill an important position in the Federal government and to be an active participant in many of the decisive movements of those historic times, some of which were not known to the public and are not until now mentioned in history.

During his connection with the government at Washington, Doctor Chapman began the accumulation of data which has made possible the production of this great work. His claim that during those fifty years nothing of value respecting Lincoln has escaped him seems fully justified by the wealth of information he has here given to the public. Without the extraordinary opportunities and the thorough personal preparation, which began in boyhood and has continued through an extended life, no author could have written a work of such great and permanent value; and from a field less extended or less productive such riches could not have been acquired. Momentous measures and movements have passed like a panorama and men have come and gone as in a moving pageant since Doctor Chapman began his preparation for this work. Not one man is now living who was then prominent in public life. At that time Blaine, Conkling, Grant, and Garfield were just beginning to attract attention. Cleveland, Harrison and McKinley were unknown. John Hay was only a President's private secretary; Roosevelt had seen but seven summers, Taft eight, and Woodrow Wilson was a restless boy of nine years in a Presbyterian manse in Virginia.

And while this procession was passing Doctor Chapman, like a toiling miner, was delving in the rock for the gold that enriches the pages of this historical masterpiece. In this he

has not been hindered but helped by the ceaseless activities that have made his life so full of notable achievements. As a pastor, platform lecturer, participant in great conventions, and valiant leader in reforms, he has always been the champion of those civic and national ideals which he learned from the great books he studied so diligently in early life, and which with such consummate skill he has in this work shown to be the mainspring of the marvelous life of Abraham Lincoln.

He has been a preacher of great earnestness and power, with pronounced evangelistic gifts and inclinations, but he is most distinguished as an authority on the fundamental principles of civil government, and as a wise and successful leader in reform movements. When the Anti-Saloon League was organized in California there was a unanimous and unyielding demand that Doctor Chapman should become the leader of that new and unique movement, and so incomparable were his achievements in that field that no one has ever doubted the wisdom of his selection for that difficult work. It was my good fortune to be one of that great assembly in San Francisco that sent Doctor Chapman out into California as superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League. The League was at that time understood to be an experimental movement but Doctor Chapman insisted that while its activities might be in a measure determined by conditions, its ideals must be fixed and immovable, and that the liquor traffic must be regarded and dealt with not as a business but as a crime, and that the League must always oppose the adoption of liquor license and any increase of the liquor license tax. He had learned these fundamentals from Lincoln and he adhered to them as tenaciously as the great Emancipator insisted that all rightful opposition to slavery must be based upon the unalterable proposition that slavery is wrong.

Dr. Howard H. Russell, founder and first superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League, says: "From the day Doctor Chapman began the study of law in 1856 until 1898 when he became superintendent of the California Anti-Saloon League, every day of his life seems to have been spent in a school of discipline,

development and instruction for his state-wide and nation-wide work." And when Doctor Chapman induced the National League to declare that the liquor license tax was "an entrenchment for the liquor traffic and the higher the tax the stronger that entrenchment," Doctor Russell said, "Doctor Chapman has convinced us all. I believe this is one of the most important measures we have thus far undertaken." And when a year later the League was led to declare that the liquor traffic is "not a business but a crime," the national superintendent, Dr. P. A. Baker, said to Doctor Chapman, "You have lifted us a notch higher." Upon that high level Doctor Chapman's "Stainless Flag" address was prepared and delivered throughout the length and breadth of this nation under the auspices of the National League. It was my supreme privilege when a pastor in Brooklyn to hear that epochal address in New York City and subsequently to learn of its great influence in creating and maintaining the conviction now so dominant in the nation that civil government cannot rightfully give legal standing to the traffic in strong drink. That address on "A Stainless Flag" is not outranked in power and eloquence by either Neal Dow or John B. Gough.

As the doctrines of Abraham Lincoln prepared Doctor Chapman for his great influence in temperance reform, so his work in that reform contributed very largely to his preparation for this monumental work on Lincoln. Without the least break or delay he passed from the strenuous struggles of the Anti-Saloon League to the work of classifying and arranging the varied and scholarly material he had accumulated. I was closely associated with him when he turned from all other activities to the happy labor of preparing the manuscript of this work. I observed the enthusiasm with which he retired from the public arena of conflict and sought the quiet seclusion in which he could work without interruption. And I have been thrilled with delight as I have seen this work take definite form and expand into such magnificent and masterful proportions. My hopes were high when I first learned of the plan and scope of the pro-



ERVIN CHAPMAN, D.D., LL.D.



posed volume, and I fully appreciated Doctor Chapman's rare fitness for the task he had undertaken, but I had never imagined that to the thousands of Lincoln publications another could be added of such surpassing interest and value. And my greatest astonishment is in finding in this work so much valuable information which does not appear in any other publication. I am delighted to note the characteristic courage with which the author calmly sets aside as untruthful many harmful statements concerning Lincoln which have been given wide publicity, and the conclusive evidence he produces in support of his declarations.

It is not a new Lincoln but a true and real, indeed a living Lincoln, which Doctor Chapman gives us in this work, a Lincoln of whose lineage and birth, and personal appearance and religious belief and experience we have every reason to be proud. And it is that incomparably great and gracious Lincoln whom the world must ever hereafter behold, admire and imitate.

Doctor Chapman has placed a grateful posterity under everlasting obligation to him for this brilliant masterpiece.

CHARLES EDWARD LOCKE,  
Pastor First Methodist Episcopal Church,  
Los Angeles, Cal.



## PREFACE

**T**HIS work is the product of more than half a century of diligent preparation and labor. It is added to the vast Lincoln library in the belief that it contains fresh and heretofore unpublished information relative to Abraham Lincoln and men and events of his day. My personal participation in the activities of the national government during Mr. Lincoln's Presidency, and my intimate acquaintance and close official association with many of the most prominent men of that day afforded me the best of facilities for acquiring knowledge of what was then in progress throughout the nation. Therefore, my personal reminiscences of those years, which are published for the first time in this work, contain much valuable information which other writers seem not to have secured.

In addition to this are the accumulations of prolonged and careful research in which nothing of value relative to Lincoln has been overlooked. More than two thousand publications have been carefully examined and made to contribute to the data which makes authentic every statement of this work. From books and other war-time publications, from national and local official records, and from Confederate documents and histories, items have been gathered and woven into connected records of events which form important new contributions to authentic history. The disclosures thus made are of great significance and some of them are so astounding that the validity of the history may at first be doubted. But investigation will establish, beyond question, the truth of every statement and deduction contained herein.

I have been greatly favored and aided in all this prolonged and taxing research. Data that had been lost have by diligent search been recovered, and much of which I had never heard came unsought into my possession and has been used to the

great advantage of this work. Many doors have been voluntarily opened to me, affording admission to unsearched realms abounding in new and exceedingly valuable material. Sympathizing friends and strangers, hearing of the nature and purpose of my work, have contributed information that has aided me greatly to enrich these pages with choice Lincolniana in literature and art.

I was especially fortunate in the extended research which made possible the preparation of the account of the Jaquess-Gilmore Mission, knowledge of which during its progress was not had even by the President's confidential secretaries, nor by any member of his Cabinet. A great flood of light is by that fascinating story cast upon the character and inner life of Abraham Lincoln, revealing his secret meditations and his undeclared hopes during even the darkest period of his life. Very extensive and unfrequented fields were perseveringly surveyed in securing the information given in that chapter. Each item is fully authenticated by unquestionable records, but here only have they been united so as to tell the thrilling story of that unique and marvelously successful adventure.

The chapter devoted to quotations from the diary of Lincoln's pastor, Rev. P. D. Gurley, D.D., is of special interest and value. The existence of this daily record by the able and distinguished minister who, during Mr. Lincoln's Presidency, was his beloved spiritual adviser and his esteemed and trusted counsellor, has for some time been known to a limited number of persons and has eagerly been sought by writers and publishers, but until the present it has been withheld from publication. I was delighted to secure the manuscript from Doctor Gurley's daughter, Mrs. Emma Gurley Adams of Washington, D. C., and I heartily commend it to the reader.

A considerable portion of this work is devoted to the correction of errors. No man in American history is so generally misunderstood as Abraham Lincoln. Erroneous statements and opinions relative to his ancestry, early life, family relations, personal appearance, bearing, habits, attitude to reforms, and

religious belief and experience have long remained uncorrected to the great detriment of the world's heritage in one of its most important characters. Those misrepresentations and misconceptions have come from conditions existing during Mr. Lincoln's life, and from the malice or inexcusable carelessness of writers since his assassination.

Mr. Lincoln was before the nation for only seven years and was known to the people of his own state for but a slightly more extended period. However, during all of that time there was in progress throughout the nation a great moral and civic movement which was characterized by intense bitterness of spirit, and personal animosities.

Mr. Lincoln was an active and influential participant in that contest and during its progress he was the target for the most vindictive and cruel personal assaults known to political campaigns. At first the misrepresentations were only such as are usual in heated political contests, for he was always held in high esteem by his partisan antagonists in Illinois. But when his fame became national, and the movement against slavery became dangerous to that institution, the warfare against him sank to a lower level and was prosecuted with less regard for truth and honor.

So long as damaging misrepresentations were confined to the campaign statements of his political antagonists their influence was not seriously harmful, but when his former law partner, William H. Herndon, published in his "Life of Lincoln" that he was of illegitimate birth and had declared to him that the same was true of his mother, the wicked falsehood was accepted as true, and added immensely to the force of other untruthful statements that were given wide circulation. As is shown in this work Herndon's statement was promptly and indignantly denied and was proved to be without the least foundation. But after that had been done it continued to be reproduced in later works and was given wide publicity.

Herndon was a pronounced infidel and in his book states that Lincoln also was an unbeliever. This declaration was

confirmed by Lamon, another infidel author of a Lincoln biography, and has been repeated by many careless writers and widely proclaimed by enemies of Christianity and of Lincoln until, in spite of his own strong, unequivocal declarations to the contrary, it is very widely believed to be true. In like manner many other harmful errors have been published and accepted until the true image of Lincoln is quite generally seen through a mask of unfortunate misconceptions.

These conditions should not be permitted to continue. It is due the memory of Lincoln that his image, so admired by the world, should be unmasked and made to appear in public thought in its unmarred purity and beauty. The misleading legendry which has become associated with his name should be cast aside and forgotten, and the truthful history of this greatest product of the new world should be reverently learned in its entirety and faithfully repeated to all the world, and to succeeding generations. To aid in accomplishing this result is the chief purpose of this work.

The charming "Stories about Lincoln" which form a chapter are pleasingly illustrative of his unique and delightful personality. Mr. Lincoln's own stories have been given large space in other publications, but brief accounts of events with which he was connected, such as are here given, have had less publicity. They are, however, bright and lovely gems picked up on vast fields of research and are here given their illuminating historical settings.

The topical arrangement of Mr. Lincoln's declarations of religious beliefs and experiences constitute a feature peculiar to this work. By this grouping of his own statements it is possible to ascertain, with but little effort, the exact truth relative to this very interesting and important matter. The collecting of this material from the large number of books consulted and its arrangement topically has been the most prolonged and tedious feature of the preparation of this work. But it has been a labor of love and of unspeakable delight. Ministers, lecturers, lawyers, teachers and writers are busy



The author while making his one hundred speeches for Lincoln's first election as President.

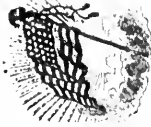
WIDE



AWAKE

1860

The badge he wore in parades during that campaign.



"O Liberty! Can Man resign thee?"  
OHIO UNION PRESIDENTIAL TICKET.  
(Election November 6, 1864.)

For President,  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN,  
OF ILLINOIS.

For Vice President,  
ANDREW JOHNSON,  
OF TENNESSEE.

Electors.

JOHN MACONNELL, At Large.  
JOHN P. BILLEN,  
JOHN K. GILLEN,  
STANLEY MATTHEWS,  
LEWIS BEGUNCKEL,  
STEPHEN JOHNSTON,  
WILLIAM L. WALKER,  
MILLER BENDER,  
HENRY W. SMITH,  
OZIAS DOFFEN,  
JACOB SCHLAGG,  
WILLIAM SHEFFIELD,  
GEORGE A. WALLER,  
HENRY F. PAGE,  
JAMES H. STANBERRY,  
JOHN H. MCCOMBS,  
FREDERICK W. WOOD,  
LORENZO DANFORD,  
JOHN MCCOOK,  
SEYMOUR MARSHALL,  
ABNER KELLOGG.

The ticket he voted four years later.



people and only a limited number have access to the thousands of publications in which this material may be found and from which it has been patiently collected and classified, as gold is gathered from a mine and cast into form for convenient use. If this shall prove helpful to my busy, burdened fellow workers I shall feel amply rewarded for my tireless labors to that end.

Special mention is here made of the efficient services of Miss Glenn Will in the diversified lines of labor by which this book has been produced. She has three times crossed the continent and prosecuted extensive research in public and private libraries and in museums and collections of rare Lincolniana. Too much cannot be said in commendation of her labors and achievements.

It is a great pleasure here to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Rev. James M. Campbell, D.D., in the preparation of this volume. Doctor Campbell has attained international fame as the author of many books of great worth, and to his ability and learning the character of this book is in no small measure due.

In a statement as brief as this must be it is not possible to mention all who have aided me in securing data or in the preparation of this work. One mind has been constantly alert and watchful for facts and suggestions concerning Lincoln, and by that assistance from my wife this publication has been made possible. With like constancy, though for a less extended period, our children have added to my resources of literature and art, and thus and otherwise have shared in my labors and achievements.

Hon. Robert T. Lincoln has with characteristic courtesy responded to all my requests for his counsel and assistance, and in interviews and by correspondence, his encouragement and aid have been exceedingly helpful. Persons in charge of public and private libraries, and of collections of Lincolniana have extended every needed courtesy. In prosecuting that research assistance of special value has been received from D. M. Gandier, D.D., Mrs. W. E. McVey, Rev. George W. Wilson, D.D.,

Rev. P. C. L. Harris, Miss Carline McIlvaine, Howard H. Russell, D.D., LL.D., Miss Laura R. Church and Mr. Douglas Volk.

Authors and publishers have with uniform cheerfulness granted permission to reproduce as has been requested. For such courtesies special acknowledgment is here made to Mr. Truman H. Bartlett, Century Company, F. C. Iglehart, D.D., Methodist Book Concern, Robert M. Browne, M.D., Mr. Frederick H. Meserve, George P. Putnam's Sons, Miss Ida M. Tarbell, Mrs. Nellie Blessing Eyster, Mr. J. L. G. Ferris, William J. Johnson, D.D., the Gerlach-Barklow Company, Mrs. Caroline Hanks Hitchcock, Houghton, Mifflin Company, Colonel A. K. McClure, Francis Grierson, Esq., Scribner's Magazine, Everybody's Magazine, Little, Brown & Company, L. C. Page & Company, Mr. John W. Lincoln, Miss Helen Nicolay, Mr. O. H. Olroyd, Mr. Harry Roseland, General James F. Rusling, Colonel W. O. Stoddard, Doubleday, Page & Company, and Hon. Henry W. Melvin.

From others whose names do not here appear I have received encouragement and aid which I hope ever to remember with appreciation and gratitude. And as I lay aside the pen with which these pages have been written, upon this work believed to have been begun and conducted under the promptings of the Divine Spirit, "I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

ERVIN CHAPMAN.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

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“From the union of the Colonists, Puritans and Cavaliers, from the strengthening of their purposes and the crossing of their blood, came he who stands as the first typical American, the first to comprehend within himself all the strength and gentleness, all the majesty and grace of this Republic, Abraham Lincoln. He was the son of Puritan and Cavalier, for in his ardent nature were fused the virtues of both, and in the depth of his great soul the faults of both were lost. He was greater than Puritan, greater than Cavalier in that he was American. Let us build with reverent hands to the type of that simple but sublime life in which all types are honored.”

—HENRY W. GRADY.

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# **VOLUME I**

“The name of Abraham Lincoln will be cherished, so long as we have a history, as one of the wisest, purest and noblest magistrates, as one of the greatest benefactors to the human race, that have ever lived. . . . So much firmness with such gentleness of heart, so much logical acuteness with such almost childlike simplicity and ingenuousness of nature, so much candor to weigh the wisdom of others, with so much tenacity to retain his own judgment, were rarely before united in one individual. Never was such vast political power placed in purer hands; never did a heart remain more humble and unsophisticated after the highest prizes of earthly ambition had been obtained.”

—J. LOTHROP MOTLEY.

## I

### LINCOLN—FORTUNE'S FAVORITE

**A** BRAHAM LINCOLN was well born, and the auspicious conditions into which he came at his birth were prophetic of the generous favors of fortune during all his life.

#### ANCESTRY

He was favored in the two lines of lineage which united in his wonderful personality. Both of those ancestral lines were of high-grade and each possessed qualities for which he was distinguished. The Lincoln line of lineage from its earliest history moved conspicuously upon a high plane, never lost, never broken and never joined in any unfavorable alliance.

The hardships of pushing back the wooded wilderness and redeeming the virgin soil for the use of man; the dangers of encounters with hostile savages; the struggle for daily bread, together with powerful religious influences, served to keep that line of lineage upon a lofty plane. The course which it followed extended from the Atlantic's rocky coast, westward through New England and across the Alleghenies and the mountains of Virginia, to the verdant valleys of Kentucky—Abraham Lincoln's native state. And the dangers and hardships through which the rugged heroes of that line were called to pass, were calculated to produce the toughened fibre of Abraham Lincoln's giant frame and his superb moral stamina.

Soon after the Lincolns reached Kentucky, Abraham Lincoln—grandfather of the great President—was shot and instantly killed by a hostile Indian. This tragedy was wit-

nessed by his youngest son, a lad of but six years of age, who was with his father at the time. Two older sons, who had accompanied their father to his work, witnessed the tragedy from a distance, and knowing that the attack indicated that other savages were lurking in the vicinity, fled, one to the nearby cabin for his rifle, and the other to the settlement for help. But the boy kept his faithful vigil close beside his father's lifeless form.

The Indian, as he approached his victim, saw the lad; and as he stooped to bear him as a trophy to his fellow savages, a well-aimed bullet from the cabin terminated his life. The boy thus rescued was Thomas Lincoln who became the father of Abraham Lincoln, the honored ruler and saviour of the nation.

Under the old English law of primogeniture, which was then in force in Kentucky, the large estate of Thomas Lincoln's father was inherited by the eldest son; and Thomas became dependent upon his widowed mother who was unable to contribute adequately to his needs. Little is known of his life until he became a man and found employment at day labor in a Kentucky frontier settlement.

A typical frontiersman was Thomas Lincoln, of stalwart form, and of fine qualities of heart and mind; as brave and fearless as had been his father; and as amiable and gentle as was his mother. He was tall and of great width of shoulders, with neck, chest and limbs fitted to grapple with the heavy tasks of the timbered wilderness, and subdue it into beauty and productiveness.

By common consent he became the arbiter of difficulties among his neighbors, for he was ever wise and fair in his judgments and fearless and effective in maintaining the verdicts he so frequently was called upon to render. These qualities were in Thomas Lincoln united with a childlike piety and humble trust in God. He was not learned in scholarship or books, but he was well and widely educated in the lessons of early pioneer experience and in Christian faith and life.

Judge H. C. Whitney tells us that, "William G. Greene, who spent one day with Thomas Lincoln and felt interested to make a study of him, avers that he was a man of great native reasoning powers and fine social magnetism, reminding him of his illustrious son. He describes him as 'very stoutly built, about five feet ten inches high, and weighing nearly two hundred pounds.' His desire was to be on terms of amity and sociability with every one."<sup>1</sup>

William Eleroy Curtis has this to say of him: "He must have had good stuff in him, for when he was twenty-five years old he had saved enough from his wages to buy a farm in Hardin county. Local tradition represents him to have been 'an easy going man, slow to anger, but when aroused a formidable adversary.'"<sup>2</sup>

Mrs. Caroline Hanks Hitchcock says: "He had been forced from his boyhood to shift for himself in a young and undeveloped country. He is known to have been a man who in spite of this wandering life contracted no bad habits. He was temperate and honest, and his name is recorded in more than one place in the records of Kentucky. He was a church-goer, and if tradition may be believed, a stout defender of his peculiar religious views. He held advanced ideas of what was already an important public question in Kentucky, the right to hold Negroes as slaves. One of his old friends has said of him that he was 'just steeped full of notions about the wrongs of slavery and the rights of men, as explained by Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine.' These facts show that he must have been a man of some natural intellectual attainment.

"Considering the disadvantages under which he labored, he had a very good start in life when he became engaged to Nancy Hanks. He had a trade and owned a farm which he had bought in 1803 in Buffalo, and also owned land in Elizabethtown. If all the conditions of his life be taken into con-

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln the Citizen, pp. 6-10.

<sup>2</sup> The True Abraham Lincoln, p. 18.

sideration, it is not true, as has been said, that Thomas Lincoln was at this time a shiftless and purposeless man."<sup>3</sup>

Indeed in every needed quality Thomas Lincoln was fitted to become the father of the one who, in his day, was both the Moses and the Joshua to deliver an enslaved race from the house of bondage, and to lead them into the land of promise. No excesses of his own, or of his ancestors, mingled weakening poison in the blood which flowed throughout his stalwart frame. He possessed qualities of body and mind that constitute the richest heritage which any man can give to posterity.

And that those noble qualities might, with certainty, be inherited by his offspring, it was provided that when Thomas Lincoln stood at the hymeneal altar, Nancy Hanks should stand beside him, and then and there plight with him her solemn marriage troth. She was his superior in every high quality. In charm of personality, exuberance of spirits, and deep religious experience she was unequalled in all that frontier region. She was of worthy and distinguished ancestry, extending back through brave and brawny pioneers to the famous early heroes of Virginia.

"The roots of the husband's ancestral tree reached down to Puritan England, and on the part of the wife, to the days when a King of Britain confronted Imperial Rome."

Nicolay and Hay, President Lincoln's private secretaries, in their great work, write of Nancy Hanks as she appeared at the time of her marriage, as follows: "All accounts represent her as a handsome young woman of twenty-three, of appearance and intellect superior to her lowly fortunes. She could read and write, a remarkable accomplishment in her circle, and even taught her husband to form the letters of his name."<sup>4</sup>

Noah Brooks says of Nancy Hanks that she "was a woman of great force of character and passionately fond of

<sup>3</sup> Nancy Hanks, pp. 56-58.

<sup>4</sup> Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. I., p. 24.

reading. Every book on which she could lay her hands was eagerly read, and her son said, years afterwards, that his earliest recollection of his mother was of his sitting at her feet with his sister, drinking in the tales and legends that were read or related to them, by the house-mother."<sup>5</sup>

No man in public life stood closer to President Lincoln than did Hon. Isaac N. Arnold, Member of Congress from Chicago, who has this to say: "Mrs. Lincoln, the mother of the President, is said to have been in her youth, a woman of beauty. She was by nature refined, and of far more than ordinary intellect. Her friends spoke of her as being a person of marked and decided character. She was a woman of the most exemplary character, and most tenderly and affectionately devoted to her family. Her home indicated a degree of taste and a love of beauty exceptional in the wild settlement in which she lived.

"But in spite of this she had been reared where the very means of existence were to be obtained by a constant struggle, and she learned to use the rifle and the tools of the backwoods farmer, as well as the distaff, the cards and the spinning wheel. She could not only kill the wild game of the woods, but she could also dress it, make of the skins clothes for her family and prepare the flesh for food. Hers was a strong, self-reliant spirit, which commanded the respect as well as the love of the rugged people among whom she lived."<sup>6</sup>

Phebe A. Hanaford says: "Abraham Lincoln's mother, noble and blessed woman, was his inspiration. She was determined that her son should at least learn to read his Bible; and, before God called her to dwell with the angels, she had the satisfaction of seeing him read the volume which he never afterwards neglected. Abraham's mother might have said, as did Mary the mother of Jesus, 'From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed'; and while this generation shall revere the name and memory of the mother of George Wash-

<sup>5</sup> Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Abraham Lincoln, p. 19.

ington, side by side with hers will it write the name of the mother of Abraham Lincoln.”<sup>7</sup>

Dr. D. D. Thompson says: “Nancy Hanks is described as tall, dark-haired, comely, dignified and winsome, by her grace and kindness. She seemed at times as if looking far away, seeing what others did not see. She had attended school in Virginia, and stood upon a higher intellectual plane than those around her. The Bible was read morning and evening, and her conduct was in accordance with its precepts. She was on the frontier, where few books were to be had to satisfy her thirst for knowledge, and where there was little intellectual culture. She was wife, mother and teacher. . . . On Sundays she would gather her children around her, and read to them the wonderful stories in the Bible, and pray with them. After he had become President, Abraham Lincoln, speaking of his mother, said: “I remember her prayers, and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life.”<sup>8</sup>

Dr. L. P. Brockett says: “Nancy Hanks was a truly noble woman, as her son’s life attested. From her came that deep and abiding reverence for holy things—that profound trust in Providence and faith in the triumph of truth—and that gentleness and amiability of temper, which, in the lofty station of Chief Magistrate, he displayed so strikingly during years of most appalling responsibility. From her he derived the spirit of humor and the desire to see others happy, which afterwards formed so prominent a trait in his character.”<sup>9</sup>

Dr. John G. Holland, one of America’s most distinguished and esteemed authors, says: “Mrs. Lincoln, the mother, was evidently a woman out of place among those primitive surroundings. A great man never drew his infant life from a purer or more womanly bosom than her own; and Mr. Lincoln always looked back to her with an unspeakable affection.”<sup>10</sup>

Charles Carlton Coffin, an able journalist, says: “Nancy Hanks Lincoln, queenly in personal appearance, imperial in

<sup>7</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Abraham Lincoln, p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 41.

<sup>10</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 23.

her aspirations, attends to her wifely duties. The day begins and ends with religious service. The cultured wife reads the Bible to the uncultured husband. His lips utter the prayer. The horizon of her life was wider than the walls of her home. . . . Little did this mother know how deeply her lessons of truth and virtue went down into the heart of her listening son; how in the fullness of time the germs would put forth their tender shoots; how her own spirit would reappear in his, and the beauty of her soul glorify his life.”<sup>11</sup>

With characteristic tenderness and beauty, Mr. Coffin further says: “Her aspirations were far different from those of her kind-hearted husband. She heard voices which he could not hear. Her discerning eyes beheld what he would never be able to see. The world will never know the greatness of its debt to her for doing what she could in stamping her own lofty conception of duty and obligation upon the hearts and consciences of her children.

“There had ever been loving intimacy and sympathy between Mrs. Lincoln and her children. She had discerned what the father had not seen in their boy, a nature rich and rare; kindness of heart, sympathy with suffering, regard for what was right, impatience with wrong. She had watched the unfolding of his intellect. He had asked questions which others of his age did not ask. She knows that her work for this life is ended. Her boy stands by her bedside.

“‘I am going away from you, Abraham, and shall not return. I know that you will be a good boy; that you will be kind to Sarah and to your father. I want you to live as I have taught you, and to love your heavenly Father.’ Through life he will hear her last words. In the full vigor of manhood he will not think it unmanly to say with tearful eyes, ‘All that I am, all that I hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.’”<sup>12</sup>

The veteran author, Francis Fisher Browne, beloved by all who knew him and by all who have read his works, says: “The tender, and reverent spirit of Abraham Lincoln, and the

<sup>11</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp. 27-28.

## 24 LATEST LIGHT ON ABRAHAM LINCOLN

pensive melancholy of his disposition, he no doubt inherited from his mother. Amid the toil and struggle of her busy life she found time not only to teach him to read and write but to impress upon him ineffaceably that love of truth and justice, that perfect integrity and reverence for God, for which he was noted all his life. Lincoln always looked upon his mother with unspeakable affection, and never ceased to cherish the memory of her life and teaching."<sup>13</sup>

The following excerpts from Mrs. Hitchcock's book are of special interest and value:—

"The beautiful Nancy Hanks seems to have been the center and leader in all the merry country parties. Bright, scintillating, noted for her keen wit and repartee, she had withal a loving heart."<sup>14</sup>

"Joseph Hanks, Nancy's brother, was a man of sterling honesty, undoubted courage and high worth. He always spoke of his angel sister Nancy with reverent emotion."<sup>15</sup>

"Simple as the home was, and hard as the work no doubt was at times, great as the privations may have been, the picture we have of Nancy Hanks' life at this period is not an unpleasant one. Her children were vigorous and happy, and evidently eager to learn. She had the joy of helping them and of seeing their growth. She was hospitable, too, and many an old neighbor has left reminiscences of visits to her home, one of whom said: 'The Lincolns' home at Knob Creek was a very happy one. I have lived in this part of the country all my life and knew Nancy Hanks and Thomas Lincoln well. She was a loving and tender wife, adored by her husband and children, as she was by all who knew her.' "<sup>16</sup>

"Abraham Lincoln was not an exception to the rule that great men require that their mothers should be talented."<sup>17</sup>

The marriage of Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, as certified by official records, was solemnized by the Rev. Jesse

<sup>13</sup> *Everyday Life of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> *Nancy Hanks*, p. 51.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>16</sup> *Nancy Hanks*, pp. 89-90.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

Head, a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the 12th of June, 1806, at the home of Richard Berry, near Beachland, in Washington County, Kentucky, and on the 12th of February, 1809, Abraham Lincoln, their second child, was born.

No one in all that frontier region, if at that time informed that a great leader was soon to arise from among them, would have thought of Thomas and Nancy Lincoln as likely to be his parents. But since the fame of their son has filled the world, critics admit that this robust woodsman and his gifted and spiritually-minded wife possessed just the qualities which shone with splendor in their famous son. Fortune's favorite indeed was Abraham Lincoln to be favored by such parentage.

But into this garden of God's own planting, into this Paradise of connubial felicity, the serpent in the guise of loving loyalty entered and cast its breath of scandal upon the stainless names of the most highly favored of American mothers and sons.

On the early pages of his biography of Lincoln, Wm. H. Herndon, with seeming indifference states that Lincoln told him that his mother, Nancy Hanks, was of illegitimate birth; and in the same work Mr. Herndon also states that the same was true of Abraham Lincoln himself. As Herndon had been Lincoln's law partner and claimed to be devoted to his memory, his statements were given unquestioning credence by the public, and were accepted as true and given wide publicity by many writers. But the relatives and friends of Lincoln in Illinois, and in other portions of the country, at once and with great indignation declared the Herndon story to be utterly untrue, and the most diligent research failed to find any foundation in fact or justification in reputable opinion for the defamatory statement.

Yet, in 1893, five years after this untruthful scandal was first published, J. J. Morse, Jr., after characterizing Herndon's statement as "more of malice than of faith," repeats it as authentic history, with grewsome details of his own imagining,

and in terms far more revolting than are those employed by Herndon. And in other publications the Herndon story continued to be repeated until it became almost generally accepted as true.

In 1899 the whole Herndon fabrication was unmasked and proved to be false by Mrs. Caroline Hanks Hitchcock of Cambridge, Mass. Turning aside from the important work in which she was engaged, Mrs. Hitchcock devoted herself with untiring energy to the task of research in all the regions from which the Lincolns and the Hankses came. With unflagging zeal and enthusiasm she patiently searched the records of counties, churches and families and at length gave to the world her priceless little volume, "Nancy Hanks," in which are published the authentic facts regarding the Hanks lineage, the marriage of Abraham Lincoln's parents and the birth of their children as found in the official public records and documents of unquestionable authenticity. The value of Mrs. Hitchcock's contribution to the history of American pioneer life and especially to the fascinating story of Abraham Lincoln cannot be overestimated. Proving as it does that the revolting Herndon story is utterly untrue it should at once and forever silence that harmful fabrication.

Notwithstanding this, however, in 1906, seven years after it had thus been proven untrue, that story reappears in an edition of Herndon's work, a copy of which now lies before me. And during that same year Henry Binns, in a well-written volume, tells the true story of the birth of Nancy Hanks and of Abraham Lincoln, as shown by Mrs. Hitchcock to be correct, and then in a footnote on the same page refers to the Appendix of his book where the Herndon story is reproduced in full. How mysterious is the fascination which that Herndon story has for some people even after they know it is utterly untrue.

In an introduction to Mrs. Hitchcock's book, Miss Ida M. Tarbell says: "To no woman whose name is of interest in American history has greater injustice been done by biographers than to Nancy Hanks, the mother of Abraham Lincoln.

This injustice has been in repeating or allowing to go unchallenged, traditions of her early life of which there were no proofs."

But that cruel "injustice" to the name and memory of the sainted Nancy Hanks has continued, by the credence given to the Herndon story and by its reproduction, until some of the most devoted admirers of Lincoln are even yet in darkness relative to these important matters. There now lies before me a volume which has been the most helpful of all the hundreds of Lincoln books I have read while preparing this work. Its able and learned author in his great work discloses an admiration for Lincoln approaching religious adoration. He is awed into reverence as he considers the material and spiritual nature of his hero whom he declares to be "one of the most wonderful beings that has appeared upon the earth." Yet this pure-minded writer speaks of Lincoln as "a weird and mysterious being who came into the world against convention." My heart sank when I realized the meaning and significance of those two words—"against convention"—and understood that, as objects take on the color of the glass through which the sunshine falls upon them, so the mind of this Lincoln admirer had received the story of his hero's parentage through a medium stained with the Herndon scandal. And I then realized, as never before, the magnitude of the task of making amends for the shameful injustice which has been done the memory of our martyred President and his godly mother. A good beginning in that work has been made in Mrs. Hitchcock's book, already cited. If given publicity by the pulpit, on the platform, in the schoolroom and by the press, as certainly should be the case, the authentic facts as laboriously gathered and published by this talented and cultured woman, will soon banish the Herndon harmful falsehoods to the darkness from which they came and to the oblivion which should be their doom.

My own humble part in this work of restitution I have religiously sought to perform by exposing and fittingly charac-

terizing the Herndon falsehoods, and by telling the true story as it is recorded in this chapter. I crave and claim the co-operation of all lovers of truth in aiding to give widest possible publicity to the facts herein stated.

#### PRENATAL INFLUENCE

Abraham Lincoln was also favored by prenatal preparation for his great earthly mission. Scientists are just coming to a knowledge of the wondrous part in human procreation which the Book of God for centuries has ascribed to woman. Respecting this subject members of the medical profession are not in perfect accord. Some deny while others affirm the theory of prenatal influence.

Dr. George Williamson says: "A child at the period of its first independent existence represents exactly the condition of the maternal parent during the months of nascency."<sup>18</sup>

On May 8th, 1913, in an address given at the University of Kansas, Dr. W. H. Carruth said: "It is plain that prenatal influences belong at the bottom to the same field as post-natal influences. . . . The temper of a colt or child can be affected by the way the mother is handled before the young is born. All this has not been recognized fully and clearly, but I believe it is undisputed today."<sup>19</sup>

In Bible history are many illustrations of prenatal influence. Moses, the greatest of all lawgivers, was born of slave parents in the depths of cruel and degrading bondage, and at a time when by royal edict all male children were ordered to be slain. But his mother by her calm confidence in God during the months immediately preceding his birth succeeded in giving to her son a nature so exalted and purposeful that the attractions of the court of Pharaoh and his adoption into the family of that famous sovereign, did not lure him from his allegiance to Jehovah, nor cause him to be unfaith-

<sup>18</sup> Laws of Heredity, p. 219.

<sup>19</sup> Eugenics, Twelve University Lectures, p. 283.

ful to his chosen people. His forty years' seclusion in the dreary regions of Mount Horeb failed to diminish his fidelity to God or to weaken his faith in His promises. No leader ever was tried more severely than was he and none ever proved more constant and true. Considered in connection with the circumstances of his birth, Moses is a striking illustration of the power of prenatal influence, and a motherhood like that which produced this great man, if environment is not pronouncedly unfavorable, will enrich the world by contributions of exalted human qualities in posterity.

The marvelous fidelity of Jeremiah during a period of darkness and despair, when kings were false and enemies were victorious, is explained by Jehovah's declaration: "Before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee."<sup>20</sup> Such prenatal influence can be secured in any age and cannot fail to result as in the case of this great Hebrew prophet.

Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, when informed that her devout life was to be crowned with motherhood, retired to the seclusion of the hills of Judah, and there for months quietly communed with God and "was filled with the Holy Ghost."<sup>21</sup> Therefore, it is said of her son that he was "filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb."<sup>22</sup>

Ishmael was a calamitous product of prenatal influence. His father was a man of the most exalted nature, a model for every age, in character, fidelity and faith. But his mother was a hot-blooded Egyptian woman who, by indulging in bitterness of spirit and furious resentment during her period of expectancy gave to this son of Abraham a nature which caused him to be "a wild ass among men" with "his hand against every man and every man's hand against him."

In striking contrast with the story of Hagar and Ishmael, so full of solemn warning, is the fascinating story of Hannah and her son Samuel, the most beloved and influential of all the Hebrew priests and prophets. Hannah's eager yearning for motherhood and her fervent prayer in the sacred taber-

<sup>20</sup> Jer. 1: 15.

<sup>21</sup> Luke 1: 41.

<sup>22</sup> Luke 1: 15.

nacle for "a male child" whom she promised to consecrate to the service of God's house, indicate her high plane of womanhood. And such a woman was Nancy Hanks Lincoln, the

"Wilding lady still and true  
Who gave us Lincoln and never knew."

As already shown she was a devout and unusually spiritually-minded Christian. During fragments of time snatched from pressing family cares and duties she diligently read the Word of God and kept in close and constant fellowship with Him by devout and earnest prayer. And Mr. Lincoln's acknowledgment of his conscious indebtedness to her for all he was and all he hoped to be was a fitting tribute to the one whom the world is coming to understand and appreciate at her true worth.

As were Jochebed, Hannah and Elizabeth, as were countless other women who became the mothers of noble men, so Nancy Hanks was fitted in body, soul and spirit to become the mother of one endowed with transcendent gifts and exalted character as was Abraham Lincoln.

During the months preceding the birth of Abraham Lincoln his mother's environment was such as an expectant mother should always have. There was no domestic discord in the Lincoln cabin to inflict a contentious spirit upon the coming child. Music and merriment had their rightful place in this pioneer household and the industrious wife, conscious of her high estate, faithfully attended to her daily duties with cheerfulness and joy.

Some regard the advent of Abraham Lincoln upon the scene of human action as something "outside the chain of natural cause and effect," and as implying an unfathomable mystery. This, if true, would deprive us of the lessons to be learned from the story of his birth, his character and life. He furnishes a striking illustration of the possibilities of an earthly life at its best, and he stands before the world as the living embodiment of what God can accomplish through His

THE  
**HOLY BIBLE,**

CONTAINING

THE OLD AND NEW

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WITH

**ARGUMENTS**

RELATIVES TO THE DIFFERENT BOOKS,

AND MORAL AND THEOLOGICAL

**OBSERVATIONS**

ILLUSTRATING EACH CHAPTER:

COMPOSED BY

THE VENERABLE MR. OSTERVOLD, PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY,

AND ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF NORWICH IN ENGLAND.

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. DR. AND MRS. J. C. OSTERVOLD

THE SOCIETY FOR PROPAGATING THE CHRISTIAN FAITH



AND SOLD BY ALL THE BOOKSELLERS IN GREAT BRITAIN

LONDON

LINCOLN'S MOTHER'S BIBLE

From which she read to her family when Abraham was a child. From an original photograph furnished the author by Mr. O. H. Olroyd, of Washington, D. C.



children if permitted to have His way. Nowhere in history can there be found the story of a human life which more clearly and effectively illustrates the potency of prenatal influence than does that of Abraham Lincoln and his mother. There never has been, nor will there ever be, another Abraham Lincoln. But there may and will be many others much like him if the lessons taught by his birth and character are learned and duly heeded by those for whom he lived and died.

#### A FORTUNATE BEGINNING

The conditions into which Abraham Lincoln entered at his birth were in every particular favorable. His parents were poor in worldly goods, but they were rich in the love and loving kindness which they lavishly bestowed upon him. Above all possible estimate it was fortunate for Abraham Lincoln, for the nation, and for all the world that he began life in such an atmosphere of peace as was that which filled the humble habitation of his early days. Between his devoted parents there was an affinity of spirit and a constancy of love and tenderness which in spite of seeming inhospitable conditions kept the infant's better nature always in comfort and content. Some, in considering this scene, think only of the earthen floor and the scant rough furniture; but during those initial hours a higher power was ministering to this child of poverty with a skill which human hands have never known.

True, there was physical discomfort in that cabin, but it made for sturdy growth of mind and body, and for the development of trust in things unseen. As the oak is toughened and made more fit for service by the cold blasts that beat against it with pitiless severity, so Abraham Lincoln was aided to become staunch and strong by the rigor of his early life.

Near the cot on which the infant slept was his mother's Bible with the truths of which she was thoroughly familiar, and his childhood's first lessons from his mother's lips were the teachings of that Book. Thoroughly and well he learned those lessons for they were taught with fervency of soul by

one who loved the sacred volume, and so effective was her work that before he learned to read the child knew from memory the pages she had read to him. His father heartily encouraged the mother's efforts to teach her children religious truth, for though he was untaught by books and schools, Thomas Lincoln was a devout Christian. Prayer and Bible study were united in this home and the growing lad, under such tuition, grew in moral stature and strength even more rapidly than he gained in physical proportions and agility.

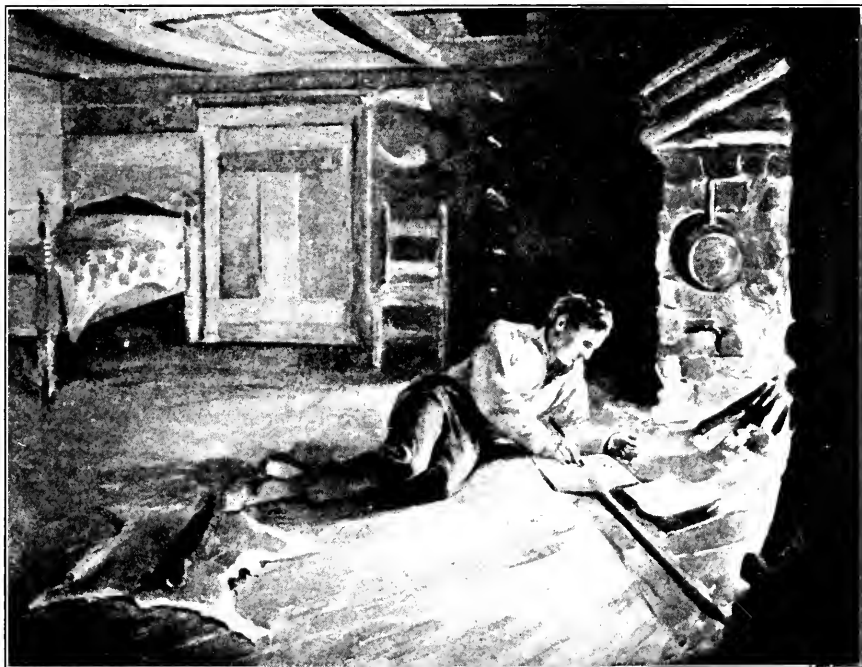
Some have claimed that Mr. Lincoln's early life was full of hindering disadvantages in spite of which he achieved greatness by his own supreme and persevering efforts. His biographers, who were his private secretaries during all his Presidency, give the following interesting sidelight in connection with their record of his early pursuit of knowledge: "He could not afford to waste paper upon his original compositions. He would sit by the fire at night and cover the wooden shovel with essays and arithmetical exercises, which he would shave off and then begin again. It is touching to think of this great spirited child battling year after year against his evil star, wasting his ingenuity upon devices and makeshifts, his intelligence starving for want of the simple appliances of education that are now offered gratis to the poorest and most indifferent."<sup>23</sup>

This passage undoubtedly represents the prevailing thought respecting the hardships in Lincoln's early life. But there was no hiatus in the plans for Abraham Lincoln's development and training. The obstacles he encountered were stepping stones which, when surmounted, raised him to a higher level, and by stimulating to greater efforts, accomplished in him great results in soul expansion and development of mind and body. Mr. Lincoln's poise of character, which has ever been the marvel of the world, was largely the product of his early struggles with the limitations of his lot, and his patient perseverance in turning to his advantage the most stubborn difficulties.

<sup>23</sup> Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. I., pp. 35-36.



CABIN IN WHICH ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS BORN



EARLY PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE



It is interesting and pleasing to think of Abraham Lincoln as winning great distinction by his own endeavors in spite of serious disadvantages; but it should not be forgotten that a higher Power participated in his development, and that the hardships and hindrances of his early and later life were parts of the work of preparing in him a hero of gigantic physical proportions, with brain of massive measurements, brawn of giant strength, and will of adamant.

President Lincoln's secretaries touch the core of the matter in the statement that, "He was evidently of better and finer clay than his fellows even in those wild and ignorant days." Unquestionably he was. And that clay which without doubt had been brought into its primal form under favorable influences was afterwards beaten by adversity into greater purity and fitness for use, as a potter prepares choice material for a vessel of surpassing excellence. The blows seem cruel but they are really beneficent for they achieve the desired result. It is safe to assume that no lesson written with charcoal on a wooden shovel, and removed the next evening to prepare for another, was ever forgotten by this earnest student. And that seeming slow advance in learning thus attained was more rapid than it appeared, and was attended by a mental discipline rarely secured by less taxing methods and endeavors. Therefore, it is no disparagement of our educational agencies to claim that Abraham Lincoln's disadvantages are to be numbered among the priceless assets of which he was the beneficiary.

In these claims, so at variance with the ordinary views concerning Mr. Lincoln's early life, I am glad for the endorsement of the Hon. John D. Long, who aptly remarks: "There are those who express surprise that Lincoln was the product of what they deem the narrow and scanty environment from which he sprang. As well wonder at the giant of the forest, deep rooted, bathing its top in the upper air, fearless of scorch of sun or blast of tempest, sprung from the fertile soil and luxuriant growth of the virgin earth, and rich with

the fragrance and glory of Nature's paradise. I can hardly think of a life more fortunate. . . . Where can be found a better preparation for an American career. To what one of those whom we call the favored youths of the land have not his splendid advantages of social position and university education sometimes seemed an obstacle rather than a help in the path that leads through the popular hedge to the popular service? Hard lines! Lincoln's is rather one of the illustriously fortunate careers of young men."<sup>24</sup>

Another, and not the least of the great favors bestowed upon Abraham Lincoln was his association with

#### STRONG FRIENDS AND FOES

During the period in which Mr. Lincoln was coming into prominence, Illinois had in its political arena a large number of brilliant and promising young men. Some were just coming into distinction when death ended their careers of usefulness; others like Edward Baker, Mr. Lincoln's cherished and trusted friend, removed to other fields, but a larger group consisting among others of Douglas, Washburne, Stuart, Stephen Logan, Davis, Wentworth, Arnold, Gillespie, Trumbull, Shields, and Bryant remained arousing him to the herculean efforts which presaged and hastened his future masterful ability and great influence. Lincoln and Douglas from the start were in political hostility. Without his contests with the "Little Giant," Lincoln would not have reached the proportions he attained or the prominence to which he rose. Those who witnessed the titanic struggles between those two political gladiators soon discovered that from each encounter Mr. Lincoln retired with head more confidently lifted, and with a greater manifest disproportion between himself and his great antagonist.

And this continued until the day when Douglas, with grace and dignity held his rival's hat, and listened with approving smiles and nods to his courageous and masterly in-

<sup>24</sup> Abraham Lincoln, *The Tribute of a Century*, pp. 319-322.



STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS



augural address.\* And the helpful influence of Douglas continued during the early months of Lincoln's Presidency and until his lamented death on the 3rd of June, 1861, closed their earthly fellowship.

Douglas, with his great ability, high ambition, magnetic personality, and tireless energy and industry was the most helpful opponent with which kind Providence favored Abraham Lincoln.

Some whom I have named above, and others of equal merit, formed a group with whom it was a priceless favor to be associated. Some were Mr. Lincoln's political antagonists, others were devoted friends, and all either by rivalry or encouragement, stimulated his vigorous and growing powers to the endeavors which brought success.

It was peculiarly fortunate that at the opportune period of his life his lot was cast with such a company of able associates and antagonists.

Abraham Lincoln was favored of fortune in

#### THE WOMAN WHO BECAME HIS WIFE

Only a woman of tremendous force of character, superior intellectual gifts and attainments, and peculiarly fitted for her delicate task, could successfully have assisted him to prepare for and to accomplish his great work. From his native state, came just the wife he needed in the person of vivacious Mary

\* Respecting this incident there has been some question which is conclusively settled by Colonel Henry Watterson of Kentucky, who was a member of Congress at the time and was one of the committee appointed to escort the new President to the place of inauguration. In his famous lecture, "Abraham Lincoln, Man inspired of God," Colonel Watterson says:

"I accompanied the cortege that passed from the Senate Chamber to the vast portico of the capitol, and, as Mr. Lincoln removed his hat to face the vast multitude in front and below, I extended my hand to receive it, but Judge Douglas, just beside me, reached over my outstretched arm and took the hat, holding it throughout the delivery of the inaugural address." Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. III., p. XX.

Todd, a woman of proud and noble lineage, extending back through many generations distinguished for the high qualities of their robust and rugged men and women. She was high-spirited, proud and ambitious, of charming personality, and of great force of character.

She had received excellent educational culture and training, and was in every way fitted for helpful companionship with a man of Mr. Lincoln's tastes and talents. Her affections were ardent, and she was passionately devoted to her family and to her personal friends. With unwavering confidence she believed in her husband and foresaw for him a distinguished career long before others recognized his worth. Her talents and temperament were the exact complement of her husband's, and aided him to develop a strong and forceful personality.

Her high ambition and unconquerable will assisted in holding him to his tasks in spite of difficulties and discouragements, before which, without her aid, even his tenacious nature might have faltered and failed.

His prolonged meditations upon the evils of slavery, and his realization of the strength with which it was entrenched, and the vigor and determination with which it was and would continue to be defended, caused him seasons of painful melancholy verging on despondency; but her exuberance of spirits came to his relief at all such times of need and kept him firm in the thickest of the fight, and confident of ultimate victory.

In his quiet quest for a satisfying religious faith, he was encouraged and aided by her keen spiritual insight and Christian experience and life. She was always by his side at public religious services, thus expressing her sympathy and fellowship with him in the unquestioning confidence in God and firm purpose to do His will for which he was so distinguished.

The assertion of her rightful authority, if at times seemingly imperious and severe; her insistence upon the strict observance of the amenities of life; and her pronounced displeasure at anything which met her disapproval, were doubtless very helpful in making Mr. Lincoln the courteous gentle-



MRS. MARY TODD LINCOLN



man he became, and in giving him his remarkable mental and moral poise.

To fill acceptably the station of First Lady of the Land, Mrs. Lincoln encountered greater difficulties than had any who preceded her in that position. Being of southern blood, birth and education, and having several relatives in the Confederate Army, she encountered the spirit of intolerance which prevailed at Washington during the Rebellion. With many it seemed impossible to regard and treat with common justice those whom they suspected were less intense than themselves in loyalty to the Union cause. This led to serious misrepresentations, and even to the circulation of falsehoods respecting Mrs. Lincoln's attitude toward the war.

Owing to the dangers which constantly threatened the nation, and the measureless suffering and sorrow resulting from the war, there were few social functions held at the Executive Mansion during Mr. Lincoln's Presidency; therefore, Mrs. Lincoln was not afforded the opportunity to win for herself the social distinction which she was so admirably fitted to achieve and hold.

Had conditions been normal during the Presidency of Abraham Lincoln, his brilliant and accomplished wife would have won from all the admiration and praise which those who knew her intimately freely bestowed. However, the serious conditions caused by the war which closed to Mrs. Lincoln the door of social distinction, opened to her a door into the realm of loving ministration which she gladly entered, and in which, with generous heart and bountiful beneficence, she wrought for sick and wounded, in hospitals and in military camps.

The love which Mr. Lincoln cherished for his wife, and his appreciation of her high ambitions, and helpful ministrations, were indicated by the promptness with which, when informed by wire of his first nomination as a candidate for President, he turned from enthusiastic friends, and hastened to his Springfield home to be the first to inform her of the great honor which had been conferred upon him.

Of like significance was his wired request for her to witness with him the closing scenes of the Rebellion. And his beloved and devoted wife was the only one invited by the happy Chieftain to join him in a restful ride on the last day of his earthly life. With unspeakable delight at the prospect of early and abiding peace, on that glad day he disclosed to her, as he did to no one else, his fond hopes and purposes for the years that should follow the close of his Presidential term. And the tragedy which a few hours later snatched him from her side, failed to break the bond by which their souls were held in union. For with that love which only ardent natures know she kept her vigil close beside him, even when her heart was breaking with anguish, and her reason was almost dethroned. And when informed that he had gone, her intense nature found expression in her memorable words, "Taken from us at the time the country needs him more than ever before."

I have seen them side by side at public worship; I have seen them close together at the White House, and I always think of them as evermore inseparable in the felicity and fellowship of Heaven, as they were in their struggles and achievements here below.

The world will never know the full extent of its indebtedness to Mary Todd Lincoln for what Abraham Lincoln was, and for what he was permitted to accomplish. Neither without the other was, or ever could have been, complete. The work which he achieved was hers as well as his, since by their union that work was made possible. And hers should be the love and gratitude which the nation gladly gives to its most worthy benefactors.

Abraham Lincoln was favored in the

#### GOSPEL MINISTERS

who came into his life. There were many such, some of whom deserve special mention, for at most auspicious times,

and by wisely chosen methods they gave him welcome and helpful religious counsel and instruction.

A gospel minister suited to his needs came into his life at the time Edward, his second son, was called away by death. No ordinary preacher could have found admittance to the inner realm where this stricken father wept in great sorrow. It required a man of high intellectual endowment, thorough education and deep human sympathy, a man whose heart was tender and loving, successfully to minister to Mr. Lincoln in spiritual things and to bring consolation to his wounded heart at that time of sore bereavement. Such a man was Rev. James Smith, D.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, one of the most esteemed, beloved and trusted of all the gospel ministers whom Mr. Lincoln knew.

There was a time in Mr. Lincoln's life when he sorely needed, though he was then unconscious of that need, a "son of thunder," to proclaim to him the gospel of salvation with tremendous eloquence and power, and to cause him to realize his need of spiritual regeneration. Such a Boanerages was Rev. James F. Jaquess, D.D., pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Springfield, with whom Mr. Lincoln came in contact in the prime of his growing manhood. Dr. Jaquess' great courage and manifest sincerity won Mr. Lincoln's high esteem, and by his burning eloquence the rising young attorney was deeply moved and edified.

Very helpful to Mr. Lincoln likewise was the influence of Rev. N. W. Miner, D.D., a Springfield Baptist minister, and for many years one of the intimate friends of the Lincoln family.

Brief, but of great influence for good, was the visit at the White House of Dr. Francis Vinton, rector of Christ Church in New York City. He was a man of extraordinary personality and one of the most popular preachers of the Church in which he had long served as a rector and in which he once declined a bishopric. Soon after the death of "Willie," Mr. Lincoln's third son, Dr. Vinton, by invitation, had an

interview with the disconsolate President and aided him to realize the continued life of those who pass before us to the better world. No spiritual adviser of the President ever heard from him such utterances of joy as did this sympathetic and heavenly-minded rector during this interview.

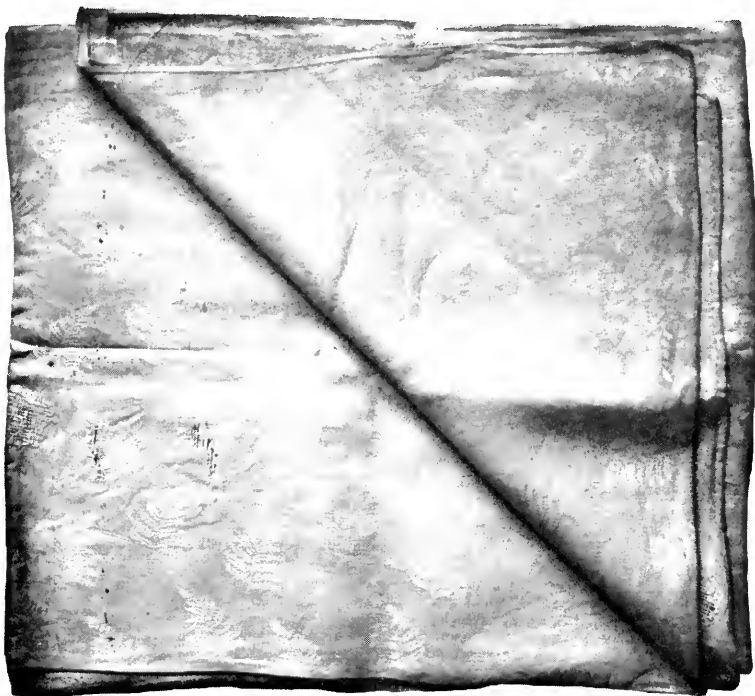
It was fortunate that President Lincoln secured a pew in the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church of which Rev. P. D. Gurley, D.D., was the pastor! Two great men met when the President and his pastor clasped hands in friendly greeting. A man of large proportions physically and otherwise was Dr. Gurley, and the President soon discovered that he had in him a counsellor adapted to his needs. Dr. Gurley's great strength in discourse, his faithful teaching of the simple gospel truths, his occasional excursions into the realm of metaphysics, and the prominence given in his preaching to the sovereignty of God enabled him to give just what Mr. Lincoln needed at the time. Probably no one was more frequently called into counsel concerning great governmental issues and movements than was the President's beloved pastor Dr. Gurley; and he came to know the mind of Mr. Lincoln as few men did.

In his quest for infallible divine truth he was favored with

#### A PERIOD OF DOUBT

Those who have claimed that Mr. Lincoln was an unbeliever have, by so doing, unwittingly helped to convince thoughtful and candid persons that his was an intelligent faith, firmer and securer after doubt and investigation than before. A man like Abraham Lincoln could scarcely be expected to come to an intelligent, satisfying religious faith without a period of doubt. By temperament he was a logician; he revelled in the higher mathematics and was at home in studies requiring a major and minor premise for a satisfactory conclusion.

Such men as he always pursue the path of honest inquiry



This Table cloth. (Fern pattern) was given to my Mother, Mrs. P. H. Guley, by Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. It was used in the Lincoln's home, at Springfield, Illinois and later, at the White House.

Emma R. Adams  
October 30, 1914.

Tablecloth now in author's collection.



with apprehension of disappointing unbelief; but their honest quest for truth adds to the strength of final faith. The eye that sees the pole star of truth in the murkiest skies has been trained and developed in the darkness of unbelief, and the ability thus clearly to see and believe the truth is produced by persevering efforts to escape from doubt.

It is not difficult to understand why staunch believers usually pass through a period of doubt before reaching a strong and settled faith. Christian faith is belief in the supernatural and it lays hold upon, and trusts in that which is unseen; it rests on that which eludes all senuous cognition. "Whom having not seen we love; in whom though now ye see him not yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."<sup>25</sup> With persons of Mr. Lincoln's temperament it is difficult to exercise such faith.

With some a period of doubt is inevitable because "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Intellectually they accept the teachings of Christianity but they cannot exercise heart-faith because they do not desire salvation. They are satisfied with their lot. They are happy in the enjoyment of health and prosperity, and therefore they are not attracted by invitations to a life of sacrifice and self-denial. But when these things fail, their hearts turn for consolation to the invitations and promises of the gospel and they become staunch and steadfast believers. For these and other reasons many of the most distinguished leaders reach the high level of unquestioning faith by a winding pathway that leads through the dark valley of doubt. And with all such, faith was made stronger and more effective by the process of doubting inquiry.

Some of the most distinguished Bible characters, according to the scriptural record, came to their great faith through a period of unbelief. Abraham, Moses, Gideon, Isaiah and Paul were stubborn doubters. Abraham doubted God's ability to fulfill His promises. Moses aroused divine displeasure by his unbelieving parley with Jehovah. Gideon required re-

<sup>25</sup> I Peter 1:8.

peated proofs before he believed. The lips of Isaiah were touched by a live coal before he responded to God's call, and in the blinding, bewildering glare of the Damascus vision Paul came to a knowledge of the truth.

Abraham Lincoln's cast of mind was much like that of Thomas. He could reason and thus reach rational conclusions. But he could not, without a process of careful investigation, accept a supernatural truth. Yet he was honest and tremendously in earnest. And he was as prompt as was Thomas to accept the evidence which was given, and as emphatic in the declaration of his faith.

#### HIS RELIGIOUS BELIEF

The climax of all the favors kind fortune bestowed upon Abraham Lincoln was his splendid religious faith. What he became and what he achieved was largely the product of his belief in things unseen and eternal. His political affiliations and activities, the prosecution of his professional work and his daily life were determined by his religious faith. So effective was that faith that in all human history, apart from the story of the Man of Galilee, there is not the record of a more exalted character than was seen in Abraham Lincoln.

What was the faith that wrought such marvelous and desirable results? That question I propose in succeeding chapters of this work fully to answer by Mr. Lincoln's own declarations, and by the testimony of "a cloud of witnesses."

## II

### LINCOLN'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE

**I**N a recent conversation with an esteemed friend, an enterprising, successful business man, I expressed an ardent, long-cherished wish, that there might be given to the public, correct information concerning the personal appearance of Abraham Lincoln.

"What difference does it make," inquired my friend, "whether he was gawky, awkward and homely, as is generally believed, or of superior physical construction, rare grace of movement and great beauty, as you so confidently claim? We know what he said and what he accomplished, why should we care to know how he looked and acted?"

Without seeming to notice this remark, and with an apology for the abrupt digression, I said: "Did I ever tell you that during all the years of my residence in Washington, there was on one of the panels of the rotunda in the Capitol, a magnificent picture of 'De Soto Discovering the Mississippi' with the Stars and Stripes floating over his head?"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed my friend in great astonishment. "The American flag in the picture of an event that occurred more than two hundred years before there was an American flag! Why was such a caricature permitted to disfigure the wall of that beautiful room?"

"Why not," I answered, "what difference does it make? We know that De Soto, the Spanish explorer, did discover the Mississippi in 1541, but why should we care what flag appears in a picture commemorating that event!"

"We should care," was the answer, "for a historical picture should be true to the facts."

"It certainly should," I replied, "and the picture of the

personal appearance of Abraham Lincoln as he is seen in the public mind should also be true to the facts, and that picture as now seen by the world is shockingly false. The De Soto picture as first painted was during later years made historically truthful by the appearance of the Spanish flag where the stars and stripes had been."

At this point my friend and I came into perfect accord and he has since been enthusiastic in his desire and effort to cause the public to understand that between the inner and the outer Abraham Lincoln there was complete harmony; that the spirit and character which for half a century have been the admiration of the world were not more beautiful and pleasing than were his physical construction and appearance.

To the work of showing that such was the case, I am devoting the succeeding pages of this chapter. My own personal observations of Mr. Lincoln's appearance and bearing will be given in connection with statements of persons who were for years closely associated with him, and from the testimony of art as interpreted by some of the most competent experts. This, it is hoped, will introduce to the reader Abraham Lincoln, as he actually looked and acted.

Mr. Lincoln's great height was the first of his physical characteristics to be noticed when coming into his presence. This never lost its impressiveness. At the first, and all subsequent meetings with him, seeing him alone or in a small or large company, looking upon him from a distance or in his immediate presence, at bright noonday or in the dim twilight, the first and abiding impression was a sense of his imposing height.

His exact height according to the measurement by Carpenter, the artist, was six feet three and a half inches "in his stocking feet," or six feet four and a half inches with his boots on. He appeared to be two or three inches taller than that when standing upon a platform delivering an address. John G. Nicolay, who for years knew Mr. Lincoln intimately in Illinois and was his chief private secretary during his

Presidency, says: "It must be borne in mind that Lincoln's height was extraordinary. A six-footer is a tall man. Put four inches on top of that and you have a figure by no means common. There are few such men in the world."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Lincoln was as erect as an Indian, with not the least inclination to stoop at the shoulders as so many writers have stated. As Gutzon Borglum, the distinguished sculptor, says, "his neck does not rest on his shoulders. It rises from them with an erectness and an alertness that is unique." This feature of Mr. Lincoln's construction accentuated his great height and contributed largely to the impressiveness of his appearance. I never saw him at close range without being impressed by the absence from his neck of wrinkles, as if it were pressed down upon his shoulders, and also the peculiar branching out and downward into the shoulders of strong, bracing sinews like the swelling out of the roots of a sturdy oak. This is seen in the famous life-mask bust by Leonard W. Volk. Mr. Lincoln's unusual height always lingered in the memory of those who saw him, after other features of his personal appearance were forgotten. The climax of his stature was his massive coronal of jet-black hair which covered his marvelous head.

In describing Mr. Lincoln's appearance as he rode down Broadway, in New York, on his way to Washington to be inaugurated as President, Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler says: "He stood up in a barouche, holding on with his hand to the seat of the driver. His towering figure was filled out by a long blue coat and a heavy cape which he wore. On his bare head rose a thick mass of black hair—the crown which nature gave to her king. . . . The great patriot-president moving slowly on toward the conflict, the glory and the martyrdom that were reserved for him still remains in my memory as the most august and majestic figure that my eyes have ever beheld."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Henry Eyster Jacobs evidently shared Dr. Cuyler's impressions for he speaks of Lincoln "as the tallest and the

<sup>1</sup> The Century, Vol. 20, p. 932.

<sup>2</sup> Recollections of a Long Life, pp. 141-142.

grandest man in the procession." The impression made by Mr. Lincoln's height upon the brilliant young journalist when he first met him is revealed as follows by Mr. James R. Gilmore of the New York *Tribune*: "Mr. Lincoln was exceedingly tall, and so gaunt that he seemed even above his actual height of six feet four inches; but he was not, as very tall men often are, ungainly in either manner or attitude. He had an air of unstudied ease, a kind of careless dignity that well became his station."

Mr. Thomas D. Jones, a Cincinnati sculptor, went to Springfield in December, 1860, to make a bust of the newly elected President, and in 1871 published in the Cincinnati *Commercial* an account of his first view of Lincoln at that time, which Nicolay copied in an article in the before-cited *Century Magazine*, as follows: "He was surrounded by his nearest and dearest friends, his face illuminated, or in common parlance, lighted up. He was physically an athlete of the first order. He could lift with ease a thousand pounds, five hundred in each hand. In height six feet four inches, and weighed one hundred and seventy-six pounds. He was a spare, bony and muscular man, which gave him that great and untiring tenacity of endurance during his laborious administration."

In the same article Mr. Jones quotes Mr. Lincoln, who was usually so disinclined to speak of himself, as saying: "All I had to do was to extend one hand to a man's shoulder, and with weight of body and strength of arms give him a trip that generally sent him sprawling on the ground, which would so astonish him as to give him a quietus."

The sculptor adds, "Well might he send them sprawling, his arms were very long and powerful and his great strength and height were calculated to make him a peerless antagonist."

Hon. Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, although he had been for four years intimately associated with President Lincoln, as a member of his Cabinet, states in his diary that he had no realization of his great strength until he saw his bare arms as he lay upon his dying bed.



LINCOLN IN 1861

From a painting by J. L. G. Ferris, designed to represent the raising of the flag on Independence Hall, Philadelphia, by Abraham Lincoln on the morning of February 22, 1861. By courtesy of the artist and Gerlach-Barklow Co.



A writer in the Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin* of November 14th, 1860, says: "The beholder felt that here was a strong man, a person of character and power."

Nicolay reproduces this statement of the *Bulletin* in his magazine article before cited and in referring to Mr. Lincoln's great height declares that "it was a stature which of itself would be hailed in any assembly as one of the outward signs of leadership."

In prosecuting the critical and prolonged investigations by which he was preparing for the production of his famous Lincoln statue which Mr. Charles P. Taft and wife recently presented to Cincinnati, George Gray Bernard reached the conclusion that Lincoln "was probably the most powerful physical being known to the frontier life." This opinion of the distinguished sculptor is corroborated by many declarations of men who were closely associated with Lincoln in Illinois and it explains his own statements before cited respecting his methods and success in vanquishing those who ventured to engage with him in physical encounters.

His great physical strength and agility were silent but potential influences combining with his heroic measurements to produce such profound impressions upon all who met him. It was not necessary that those who were in his presence should know of his great physical powers in order to feel the power of his personality. Horace Greeley, while criticising his administration, refused to hold a conference with him because he never could oppose or disagree with him when in his presence. Back of his imposing physical proportions, his marvelous eyes, his manifest sincerity and the pleasing tones of his voice in conversation, was the power-house of his great strength, making all else effective.

Col. A. K. McClure, of Philadelphia, one of the ablest and most influential political leaders of those times, states that when he "first met Lincoln at his home in Springfield, soon after his election as President in 1860, his heart sank within him, as he remembered that this was the man chosen by a

great nation to become its ruler in the gravest period of its history." But he adds, "Before half an hour had passed I learned not only to respect but indeed to reverence the man."

Mr. Lincoln had invited Colonel McClure to visit him for consultation, and had himself answered the doorbell and received him when he arrived at seven o'clock in the evening; but in his attire he made not the least preparation for the coming of his distinguished caller.

Just previous to Colonel McClure's visit Mr. Lincoln had invited General Simon Cameron to become a member of his Cabinet. This was very objectionable to Colonel McClure, and during the interview Mr. Lincoln made no concessions to the Colonel concerning the matter. Yet, with this serious disadvantage, together with the unfavorable first impression before mentioned, Mr. Lincoln, during that evening interview, won the confidence, esteem and love of Colonel McClure to such a degree that he remained one of his most devoted friends and supporters until the day of his death.

Judge Whitney, who for years was closely associated with Lincoln in his law practice in Illinois, and who never failed to give him the full measure of his loyal and earnest support, tells of his first impressions of Lincoln, as follows: "While court was in session Lincoln came straggling carelessly in. His face divested of his usual melancholy garb, and apparently in a humor to take life easy and gaily for the present moment. I noticed his intellectual countenance and especially his eyes, so clearly indicative of deep reflection, at the first glance. I mentally pronounced him to be a great man at once. I never saw any man who impressed me so highly, at first sight, as Abraham Lincoln."<sup>3</sup>

Of his silent, involuntary influence upon those with whom he mingled, Francis Grierson says: "Lincoln's presence infused into the mixed and uncertain throng something spiritual and supernatural. His looks, his words, his voice, his attitude, were like a magical essence dropped into the seething cauldron

<sup>3</sup> Life on the Circuit with Lincoln, p. 30.

of politics, reacting against the foam, calming the surface and letting the people see to the bottom. It did not take him long."<sup>4</sup>

William O. Stoddard, who is still living, was one of President Lincoln's private secretaries, and in one of his valuable literary works makes the following interesting and instructive statements: "One strong impression was left upon my mind indelibly. I saw him on various occasions, under varied circumstances, surrounded by or in conference with the foremost men of his day. Among them were his Cabinet officers, senators, congressmen, jurists, governors of states, scholars, literary men, military and naval celebrities, foreign ambassadors. Of many of these men I had myself formed previously even exaggerated estimates. I took note, however, of one inevitable unfailing phenomenon. Every man of them seemed suddenly to diminish in size the moment he in any manner came into comparison with Mr. Lincoln. Another curious thing was that all the really ablest men among them were aware, consciously or unconsciously, of the superior strength confronting them."<sup>5</sup>

My own observations and experiences relative to the matter here mentioned by Mr. Stoddard were identical with his, as stated by him herein, with such force and clearness. Upon all occasions it was the same when Mr. Lincoln was standing or moving about with other men, he was absolutely and always in a class by himself, as was realized by those who saw him in company and as shown by all photographs in which he appears as one of a group. In a picture taken in front of an army tent, between a Union general and a detective, his superiority in personal appearance is impressively shown. Perhaps that superiority is seen more clearly in his picture taken with a larger company consisting chiefly of officers in McClellan's army before Antietam. In these, as in all similar pictures as well as in living groups before his death, the towering

<sup>4</sup> *The Valley of Shadows*, p. 200.

<sup>5</sup> *Lincoln at Work*, pp. 9-10.

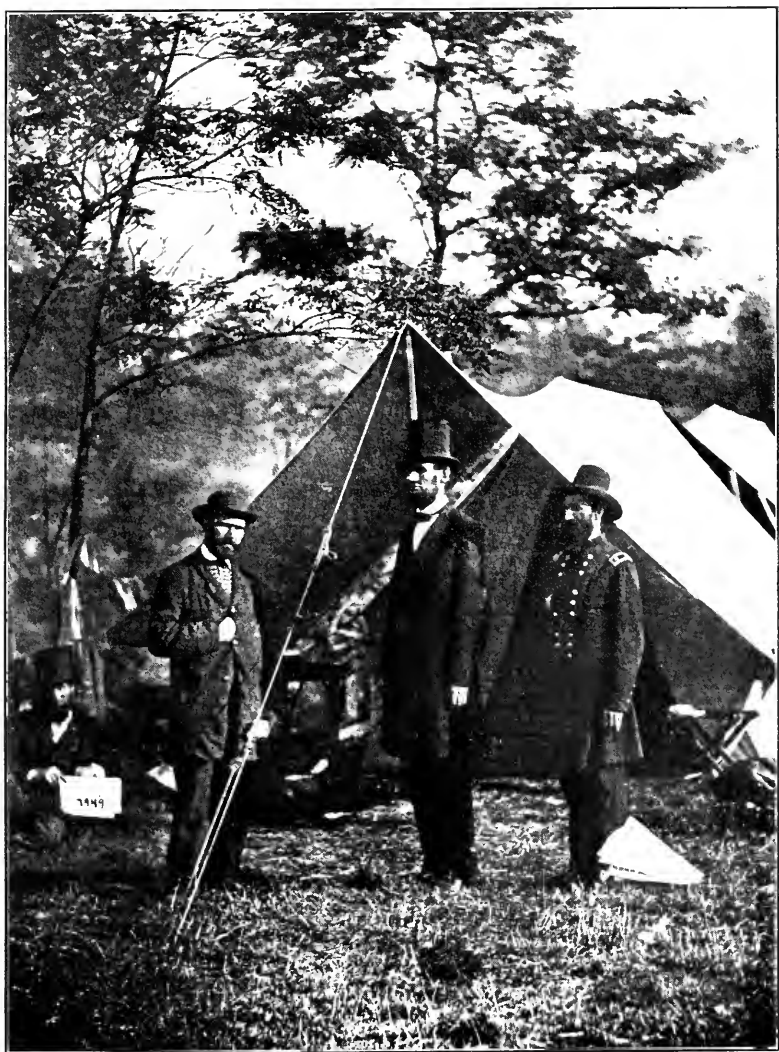
figure first attracted attention, but it was an indefinable majesty of being and bearing that made him continue as the center of attraction wherever he appeared.

At his second inauguration as President, Mr. Lincoln's superiority in personal appearance to all other public men of his day was seen with great distinctness. Never did he appear so august and imposing, so magnificent and masterful as upon that occasion, surrounded as he was by a large company of the most distinguished and fine-looking men ever assembled in one gathering during the history of the nation. An extended account of that event and of his appearance and movements upon that occasion can be found elsewhere in this work.

But imposing as was his appearance when mingling with other men, it was still more so when he was addressing an audience upon a subject in which he was deeply interested. As Nicolay says: "As a standing figure he was seen to best advantage on the orator's platform. At certain moments, when, in summing up a connected series of logical propositions, he brought them together into a demonstration of unanswerable argument, his form would straighten up to full height, the head would be slightly thrown back, and the face become radiant with the consciousness of intellectual victory, making his personal appearance grandly imposing and impressive."<sup>6</sup>

Francis Grierson, who heard Lincoln in his debates with Douglas, gives the following thrilling word picture of his appearance on those occasions: "He stood like some solitary pine on a lonely summit, very tall, very dark, very gaunt, and very rugged, his swarthy features stamped with a sad serenity, and the instant he began to speak the ungainly mouth lost its heaviness, the half-listless eyes attained a wondrous power, and the people stood bewildered and breathless under the natural magic of the strangest, most original personality known to the English-speaking world since Robert Burns. Every look of the deep-set eyes, every movement of the promi-

<sup>6</sup> *The Century*, Vol. 20, p. 933.



PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN

and Detective Allan Pinkerton in General McClelland's tent before Antietam.



ment jaw, every wave of the hard gripping hand, produced an impression, and before he had spoken twenty minutes the conviction took possession of thousands that here was the prophetic man of the present and the political saviour of the future."<sup>7</sup>

Equally graphic, more scientific and faultlessly faithful to truth, is the following from Truman Bartlett, the famous American sculptor: When speaking "waves of righteous indignation came sweeping over him. His body was transformed and his face was lighted with a mysterious inner light. The dull, listless expression dropped like a mask. The melancholy shadow disappeared in a twinkling. The eyes began to sparkle, the mouth to smile, and the whole countenance was wreathed in animation. The hard lines faded out of his face and the emotion seemed to diffuse itself all over him. His sad face of a sudden became radiant; he seemed like one inspired.

"The act of expressing a great sentiment or concluding a fine period, transformed Lincoln into beauty and nobility of bearing. He often quivered all over with emotion nearly stifling his utterance.

"All agree in stating that he had wonderful vertical elasticity and could, while speaking, stretch up to an unwonted height, or appear to do so, which as artists know, is a quality seen only in people of the highest physical construction. These things suggest a splendidly sensitive, responsive and powerful system of nerves, a muscular organization of a rare and superior kind, an admirable body and a deep harmony between the outer and inner man."<sup>8</sup>

The great debates with Douglas attracted to Illinois prominent political leaders and others who were just beginning careers of public service. Among the latter was Hon. James M. Ashley of Ohio, who, at that time, was conducting his first campaign for a seat in Congress. He was a strong, am-

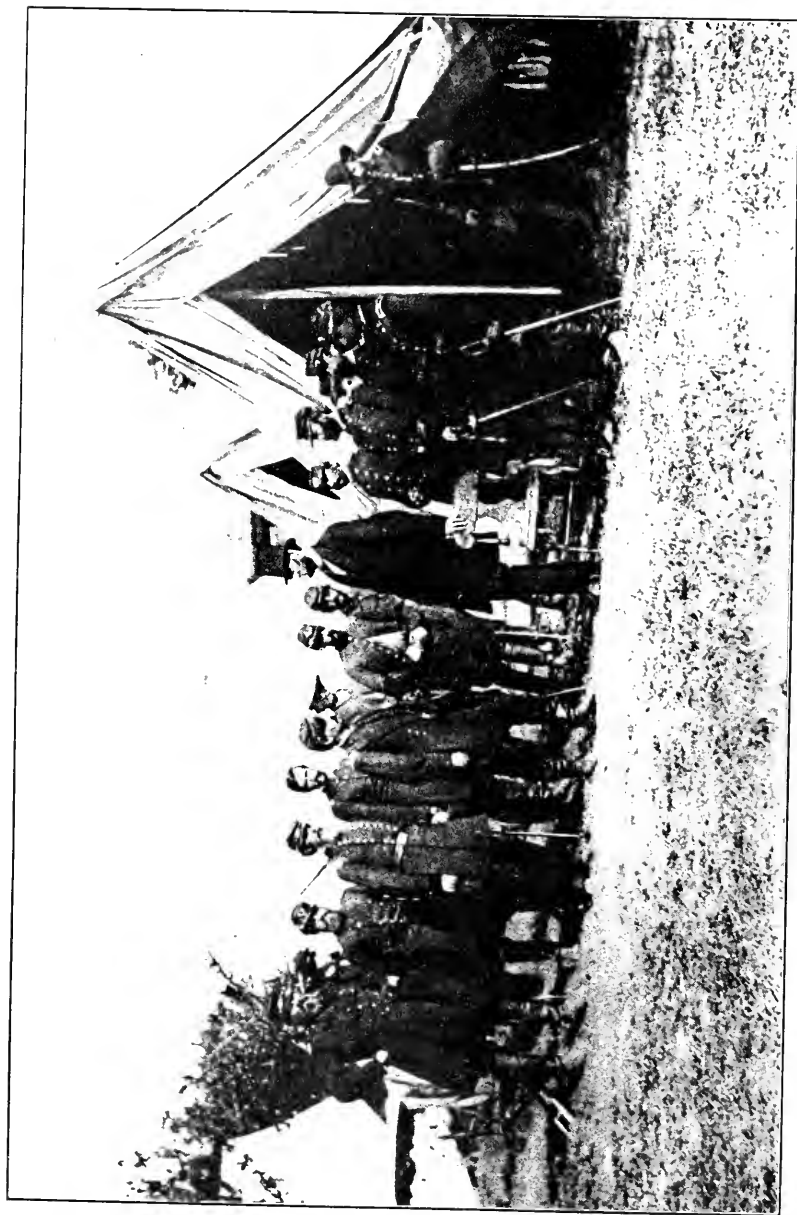
<sup>7</sup> *The Valley of Shadows*, p. 198.

<sup>8</sup> *The Portraits of Lincoln*, pp. 15, 16, 18.

bitious young man and an ardent supporter of Chase as a candidate for the Presidency. He had never seen Lincoln but immediately after the October election he hastened to Illinois just in time to hear the last of the memorable debates. I have today a vivid recollection of the irrepressible enthusiasm for Lincoln with which General Ashley returned to his Toledo home, and to the people who had just chosen him as their representative in Congress. He remained loyal to Chase, however, as the first choice of Ohio for the Presidential nomination two years later, but his high estimate of Lincoln's ability soon became known throughout the state and had much to do in producing the condition of public thought that caused the votes of four Ohio delegates in the Chicago convention to be changed from Chase to Lincoln, by which the latter on the third ballot was nominated for President. Although it was at the close of that long and taxing struggle, Lincoln's vitality and strength were sufficient to accomplish that result and to cause General Ashley at the close of his distinguished and useful life to say: "When I heard Mr. Lincoln proclaim at Alton 'that it was a question between right and wrong' his face glowed as if tinged with a halo, and to me he looked the prophet of hope and joy."

The impressiveness and force of Mr. Lincoln's heroic stature was accentuated by the symmetry and grace of his physical construction. In size and form the members of his body were all in perfect proportion. Considered separately they seemed ponderous, but the size of each one was in faultless harmony with the heroic figure of which it formed a part.

Some writers have unfortunately referred to "his long arms" and "his large hands and feet," forgetting as it seems that Mr. Lincoln was a very large man and would have been ill-formed if any of his members had been of less dimensions. Nicolay says: "The first impression will naturally be that a man with such long limbs and large and prominent features could not possibly be handsome; and this would be true of a



THE GREATEST AMONG THE GREAT

From a photograph of President Lincoln with the officers of McClellan's Army before Antietam, in 1862.



man of ordinary height. Long limbs and large and strong features were fitted to this unusual stature, and harmonized perfectly with it; there was no effect of disproportion or grotesqueness."<sup>9</sup>

Sculptors and critics are agreed in characterizing Lincoln's hands as marvelously shapely and beautiful. Borglum says: "His hands were not disproportionately large. In his early life hard labor had developed the palms of his hands, and the thick muscle part of his thumb was full and strong; but this shrank later to the thumb of a literary man."

Bartlett says: "The photograph of Lincoln and Little Tad shows the President's great style of hand and its splendid articulation with the wrist. A hand fit not only for the first and greatest American, but in every way worthy to write, as he did, literature that is nothing less than biblical in its majestic simplicity."<sup>10</sup>

Bernard says: "Next to the face, as an index of Lincoln's character, came his hands. The fingers are long and tapering, and the lines that divide them are almost straight and parallel. The hands suggest sensitiveness, silence and repose."

His shoulders were broad and his chest massive, like those of his muscular father. His arms and legs were longer than were Thomas Lincoln's, for he was of much greater height. All sculptors who have made a careful study of Mr. Lincoln's physical form are united in the declaration that he was of very rare and symmetrical construction. Very tall men are usually clumsy and awkward in movement, but it was quite otherwise with Mr. Lincoln. Bartlett quotes approvingly the following from Nicolay: "There was neither oddity, eccentricity, awkwardness nor grotesqueness in his face, figure or movement. On the contrary he was prepossessing in appearance when the entire man was fairly considered, mentally and physically, his unusual height and proportion, and the general movement of body and mind. His walk was vigorous, elastic,

<sup>9</sup> The Century, Vol. 20, p. 932.

<sup>10</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 33.

easy, rather quick, firm and dignified; no shuffling or hesitancy."<sup>11</sup>

Hon. H. C. Deming describes "his posture and carriage" as being "with the grace of unstudied and careless ease rather than of cultivated airs and highbred pretensions." My own recollections are that seated or standing he had an artless and unconscious dignity of which there could be no counterfeit or imitation, and every movement however slight or considerable was gracefully pleasing and impressive.

There have been published some very careless and misleading statements concerning Mr. Lincoln's habits of dress.

Hon. Joseph H. Choate, the distinguished lawyer, statesman and diplomat, was a young man when Lincoln delivered the Cooper Institute address and in his personal reminiscences of that event in describing Lincoln's appearance he says: "His great stature signalled him out from the crowd. His clothes hung awkwardly on his giant frame."

One of the members of the Young Men's Central Republican Union, under whose auspices that address was delivered, in a recently published account of that affair writes: "His dress that night before a New York audience was the most unbecoming that a fiend's ingenuity could have devised for a tall, gaunt man—a black frock coat, ill setting and short for him in the body, skirt and arms—a rolling collar low down, disclosing his long, thin, shrivelled throat, uncovered and exposed."

These two descriptions of Mr. Lincoln's attire at the time of that most important event in his pre-presidential life are fairly representative of similar statements which have been published in periodicals and books. No such severe characterization of Mr. Lincoln's dress upon that momentous occasion was published at the time of the event, nor until after it had become the prevailing custom for writers to exercise their best gifts upon efforts to disparage Mr. Lincoln's personal appearance. Some writers seem to think that a true and faithful

<sup>11</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 12.

picture of the inner Lincoln, and his achievements, must have for a background a shocking caricature of the outer Lincoln. Hence, his dress has been made the subject of most unfortunate misrepresentations of which the foregoing are fair samples.

It is not at all probable that Mr. Lincoln was to any degree carelessly or unbecomingly dressed at the time he made the Cooper Institute speech. He realized fully that it was an occasion of very great importance to his own political preferment. His ambition at that time was to be chosen as Vice-President at the next national election. He was aware that those who were seeking the nomination of Seward as the republican candidate for President were planning to have him selected for the second place. That was the extent of his aspirations while preparing for the Cooper Institute speech, although his friends in Illinois were vigorously conducting a campaign to place his name at the head of the ticket. In either event this engagement to speak in New York City was a golden opportunity if he could measure up to its requirements. So keen was his realization of all this that on Sunday afternoon he broke an engagement to dine at the home of Henry C. Bowen that his thoughts might not be diverted by social amenities from the address he had to deliver the next evening. He was oppressed by his realization of the requirements of the opportunity to address such an audience, and that he might appear to good advantage he was clad in an expensive new suit made expressly for that occasion. He was not without experience, being just past fifty-one years of age and having been prominently before the public for many years. It is, therefore, not in the least probable that there was any lack of comeliness in his attire apart from the unavoidable difficulty of fitting an outer garment to a form of such unusual measurements. That his garments did not fit as closely as did those upon the rotund figures of Bryant and Field is possible, but that they were less becoming than others is not probable.

Fortunately, however, we are not left to probability respecting his appearance upon that platform. During the after-

noon of that 27th of February, 1860, Mr. Lincoln, clad in the suit he wore while delivering the Cooper Institute address stood before the camera for a full length photograph by Brady. The attention of the reader is most earnestly invited to that picture with its dignified, impressive pose, compact, sinewy neck, gracefully curved collar and well-fitting, becoming coat and vest, silently protesting against all representations of Lincoln's attire upon that occasion as lacking in any particular.

This one picture of Lincoln as he appeared on the day of that address should be sufficient to silence, forever, all claims that he was careless in his attire. The picture being a photograph taken from life cannot be untruthful and bears witness to the scrupulous care with which Mr. Lincoln prepared for his appearance before the public. But it would perhaps be well for the reader to consult other Lincoln photographs and note the uniform fit of coat and vest to the neck and chest, and the graceful folds and lines of every garment worn. Each one will be found to confirm the statement of Dr. F. Fuller that "a peculiar air of neatness and refinement so difficult to describe, yet so attractive, always pervaded him."<sup>12</sup>

The following in the Nicolay *Century Magazine* article has peculiar weight in this connection: "There were many flippant and ill-natured remarks concerning Mr. Lincoln's dress, giving people the idea that he was either very rude by nature, or given to hopeless eccentricities. Nothing could be more untrue. He suffered no wise in comparison as to personal appearance with Douglas, the senator, or Bryant, the poet, or Edward Everett, the polished statesman, diplomat and orator.

"In the fifteen hundred days during which he occupied the White House, receiving daily visits at almost all hours, often from seven in the morning to midnight, from all classes and conditions of American citizens, as well as from many distinguished foreigners, there was never any eccentric or habitual incongruity of his garb with his station. The world has yet to learn that General Scott, or Lord Lyons, or Bishop

<sup>12</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, p. 3.



### LINCOLN AT COOPER INSTITUTE

From a photograph by Brady, New York, February 29, 1860, showing Lincoln's attire when he delivered his Cooper Institute address.

By courtesy of Mr. F. H. Meserve, New York City

(See page 54)



Simpson, or Prince Napoleon, or Archbishop Hughes, or the Comte de Paris, or Chief Justice Taney ever felt humiliated by the dress or want of dignity of President Lincoln in state ceremonial or private audience."<sup>13</sup>

Mr. Lincoln was as refined and courteous in bearing as he was gentle and kind in disposition. His great wealth of affection and sympathy found constant expression in tones of tenderness and words well chosen and fitting. He was as refined as Chesterfield and as self-forgetful as Sir Philip Sydney. His manners were in keeping with his motives and he could not be rude or severe in word or act. In all of his struggles with Douglas he was the high-toned gentleman of whom the most cultivated were rightfully proud. However severe the provocations, and they were sometimes intolerable, he was not once exasperated so as to speak unadvisedly or act in an unbecoming manner. In his severe trials as President he always manifested that considerate regard for others which was so becoming to the exalted station he occupied. His closest private secretary, who saw much more of him during that period than did any other person, states that "he always listened with patience even when the request of his petitioner might be frivolous or foolish. He gave others courtesy, kindness and consideration to the last degree."

During all those trying years he never spoke a harsh or impatient word to any one of his secretaries or to others in their presence as they voluntarily testify. And of the many who were officially and otherwise associated with him no one has made record of a word or act of President Lincoln lacking in any of the qualities which should characterize the deportment "of a natural gentleman," as Bartlett designates him.

But on the other hand, as stated by the same writer, "He had perfect naturalness and native grace which never failed to shine through his words and acts. He always maintained a signal reserve without the least effort. He appeared and acted with an elegance that a king might envy and common men

<sup>13</sup> Vol. 20, pp. 934-937.

despise. He moved with an ease that was in the highest degree impressive and with a grace of nature that would have become a woman."<sup>14</sup>

When he first met Dr. Cuyler in Chicago, soon after his election as President, he promptly exclaimed, "I have kept up with you nearly every week in the New York *Independent*." This little sally of social suavity "touched the soft spot" in the heart of the veteran preacher and writer as Dr. Cuyler himself states. All statements and insinuations to the effect that Mr. Lincoln was lacking in the social amenities of life are fittingly rebuked by the following statement of Mr. Edward Everett: "I recognized in the President a full measure of the qualities which entitle him to the personal respect of the people. On the only social occasion on which I ever had the honor to be in his company, viz., the Commemoration at Gettysburg, he sat at the table of my friend David Wills, by the side of several distinguished persons, foreigners and Americans; and in gentlemanly appearance, manners and conversation, he was the peer of any man at the table."

There is a sharp conflict between literature and art touching Mr. Lincoln's personal appearance. His features are the center of that contest. For many years literature was alone in activity in that field and was undivided in testimony until at length in 1891 Mr. Nicolay published in *The Century Magazine* an able, discriminating article showing that the representation of Mr. Lincoln as ungainly, awkward and homely was radically erroneous. But writing disparagingly of Mr. Lincoln's looks had become so prevalent and was continued so persistently that even the strong and unequivocal testimony of the great President's private secretary attracted but little attention and was soon forgotten by the public. Mr. Nicolay in his article explained conditions by saying: "Partly as a blind inference from his humble origin, but more from the misrepresentations made, sometimes in jest, sometimes in malice, during political campaigns, there grew up in the minds of many

<sup>14</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 16.

the strong impression that Mr. Lincoln was ugly, gawky and ill-mannered."<sup>15</sup>

Borghum, in the same line, very pathetically says: "Lincoln, one of the greatest of observers, was himself the least truly observed. God had built him in the backyard of the nation. . . . He was heard, but seems rarely, if ever, to have been truly seen. . . . It is surprising that professional observers, artists and writers alike, have drawn and redrawn an untrue picture of this man. . . . The hundreds of copyrighted lives of him, in their personal description, are largely reiterated popular opinion and hearsay."

Bartlett, with regret amounting almost to humiliation, says: "Biographers, statesmen, scholars, and writers have echoed ordinary observers with such persistence that it would seem they took delight in trying to heighten the incongruous contrast between the outward and the inner man."<sup>16</sup>

The manner in which this misrepresentation of Lincoln's physical construction and appearance was conducted is thus described by Bartlett: "The vocabulary employed to describe him includes about every word in common use in the English language, the meaning of which is opposed to anything admirable, elegant, beautiful or refined."<sup>17</sup>

The effect upon the public mind of this persistent misrepresentation is stated by Bartlett as follows: "It is the popular belief, the world over, that Abraham Lincoln was in face and figure, in action or repose, an ugly man. While the feeling of Lincoln's rare and superior worth as a man has steadily increased since his death, with startling strides and unexpected surprises, his personal appearance as it was first described has gone into unquestioned history."<sup>18</sup>

And even Lowell, so ardently devoted to the memory of Lincoln, in the great poem in which he designates him as "The

<sup>15</sup> Vol. 20, p. 932.

<sup>16</sup> Portraits of Abraham Lincoln, p. 11.

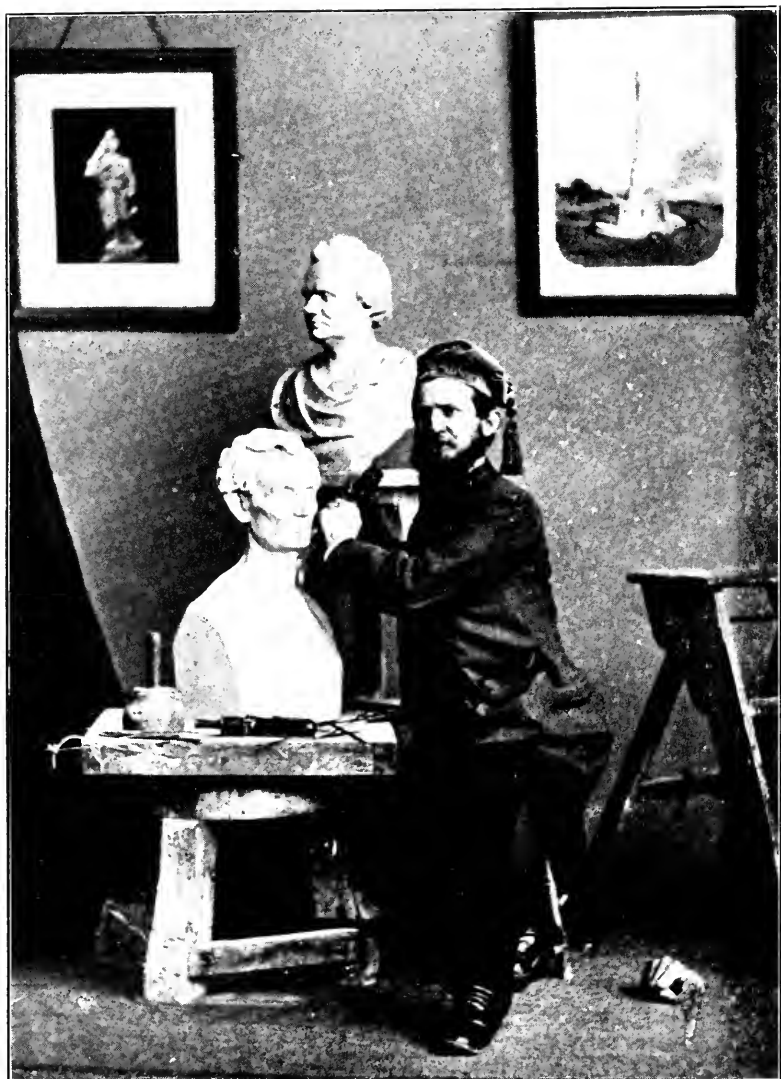
<sup>17</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> Portraits of Abraham Lincoln, p. 11.

First American" tacitly admits Lincoln's lack of comeliness and apologetically says:

"Outward grace is dust."

During all the years since Lincoln's death art was in the field and was silently contradicting the claims of literature respecting Lincoln's physical construction and appearance. But not until recent years has public attention been effectively called to the conclusive proof of his peerless and symmetrical proportions and his rare beauty of form and features as shown by the artist's sensitized plate and the sculptor's mold. Few public men have been so plentifully and so variously represented in art as has Abraham Lincoln. Because of his kindness to artists who asked for sittings we now have Daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, photographs and masks taken from life during a period beginning in 1848, when he was thirty-nine years old, and continuing until only a few weeks before his death. These are unimpeachable witnesses whose testimony cannot be disproved, nor even questioned. Statements of literature are expressions of fallible human opinions. Photographs are records of unquestionable facts. Literature at best is a statement of what the writer believes to be true. A good photograph is truth itself. Literature may be, and often is, false. A good photograph cannot be untrue. A first-class photograph and a well-made life-mask cannot tell "the whole truth" but they can and do tell "nothing but the truth." And all lovers of truth and all admirers of Lincoln may well rejoice at the entrance into this field of investigation of some of the ablest, most skillful and learned sculptors of the world who, with the Volk life-mask and the products of the camera, have given to the world its first truthful and accurate description of the physical construction and appearance of Abraham Lincoln. It was at the prime of Mr. Lincoln's heroic manhood in 1858 that Leonard W. Volk met the future President at one of the great debates and secured from him a promise to sit for a life-mask when next in Chicago for several consecutive days.



LEONARD W. VOLK AND HIS BUSTS OF LINCOLN AND DOUGLAS  
From an original photograph presented the author by Miss Caroline  
McIlvaine, Chicago.



Mr. Volk was at that time engaged in making the heroic statue of Douglas which adorns one of the public parks of Chicago, and therefore it was not until April, 1860, that the opportunity came to make the famous Lincoln life-mask and bust. This was done soon after the Cooper Institute speech and a few weeks previous to the Chicago convention by which Mr. Lincoln was nominated as a candidate for President. Soon after that nomination Volk supplemented his work by making plaster casts of both of Lincoln's hands.

Good fortune favored the sculptor's purposes in this matter and helpful influences inspired his genius and aided his efforts. Volk was an ardent admirer of Douglas who, at that time, was the leading democratic candidate for President. Having made a life-mask of Douglas of whose nomination he felt assured, he was ambitious also to do the same for the republican who would be nominated as a candidate for that office. But none of the leaders of the republican party whom Mr. Volk consulted would venture an opinion as to their probable nominee and not one of them suggested the possibility of Mr. Lincoln's nomination. But seeing in the papers an announcement that Mr. Lincoln was in Chicago on professional business and would remain for two weeks, Volk hastened to the courtroom and made arrangements with Lincoln for the sittings which had been promised him nearly two years before. Thus, unwittingly, the enterprising sculptor secured the coveted opportunity to make the life-mask of the republican candidate for President, and as we now know, the greatest and most beloved of all Americans.

There seems to have been a special illumination of the sculptor's mind and soul while engaged on the Lincoln mask and bust, enabling him to make available the before-mentioned events and incidents in the production of one of the greatest and most nearly perfect works of sculptural art in human history. That life-mask thus providentially produced has, for half a century and more, been subjected to the critical examination of the most skillful, learned and widely experienced

sculptors of the world, and as far as known, has never been spoken or written of otherwise than in terms of very strong commendation. Its praises have been and still are being sounded not only by the foremost of American artists and scholars but by the most eminent sculptors of France.

That bust is such an exact reproduction in form and size of Lincoln's head, features, neck and shoulders when he was at his prime of strength, and comeliness, that in its presence one has a thrilling sense of being with Lincoln himself. To place the hand caressingly upon the forehead, or cheek of that bust, as for years I have done almost daily with the copy that stands on an oak pedestal in my library, where I am now writing, is to have the whole being filled with mingled emotions of love and admiration for one so noble and majestic.

The best photograph of Lincoln enables us to see him from only one viewpoint, but the bust permits us to look at him from every angle as we used to do when he was with us, and even to seem to touch him as if he were still personally present.

The rare excellence of the mask is proved by the unequivocal and conclusive testimony of thoroughly competent judges. John Hay, in an unqualified commendation of the Volk life-mask says:

"The face has a clean, firm outline; it is free from fat, but the muscles are hard and full; the large mobile mouth is ready to speak, to shout, or laugh; the bold, curved nose is broad and substantial, with spreading nostrils; it is a face full of life, of energy, of vivid aspiration."<sup>19</sup>

Bartlett says: "This life-mask is the first reliable contribution to the material upon which a safe examination of the forms of his face can be made."<sup>20</sup>

The same author also states: "It is a perfect reproduction of Lincoln's face. Both mask and hands are distinguished for exactitude of form." And in his account of submitting the life-mask to the world's most eminent sculptors at Paris, Mr. Bartlett writes: "All of those distinguished sculptors examined

<sup>19</sup> *The Century*, November, 1890.      <sup>20</sup> *Portraits of Lincoln*, p. 19.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Bust from the famous life-mask made in Chicago by Leonard W. Volk, in April, 1860, a few days before Lincoln's nomination as a candidate for President. From a photograph of the bust which is in the author's collection.



and discussed the mask as an original and interesting piece of facial construction."<sup>21</sup>

Bernard says: "His face, the temple of his manhood, we have with us in the life-mask."

"It is infallible," was Borglum's characterization of the life-mask after devoting many months to the most diligent study of that great work of art, and after the careful perusal of all of Lincoln's speeches and writings together with the story of his life and the history of his efforts and achievements. Borglum here employs a term that can never be properly applied to any product of human ingenuity and skill. Nothing that man has constructed is "infallible." But that bust was not constructed. It was not formed and fashioned by human hands. It was cast in a plaster mold, formed on Lincoln's face and removed when it was set, and therefore in its every detail it is "infallible," as Borglum says, and "a perfect reproduction of Lincoln's face," as Bartlett says. So strong were the muscles and so firm the skin of Lincoln's face that even minor details like the pores in the skin made their impression in the soft plaster mask and reappeared with marvelous distinctness in the bust that was cast in that mold. That "infallible" bust bears witness to Abraham Lincoln's rare comeliness and beauty. To look upon it is to know that in form and feature he was not less attractive and pleasing than in his inner nature which all the world admires. The first impression it produces is thrilling and close examination deepens the delight at first experienced. To an uncultured beholder it is impressive and charming, and to the learned and critical it is grand and beautiful.

Mr. Bartlett says the mask shows "a knightly readiness, such as is seen in the photos taken immediately after his nomination, and greatly beautiful in its human style and gravity." "The upper, larger portion of Lincoln's profile projects more than is the case with most good faces, which was the distinguishing feature of the best Greek faces over all others."<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 25.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

Borglum says: "You will find written on his face literally all the complexity of his great nature."

Bernard says: "Lincoln's life-mask is the most wonderful face left to us, a face utterly opposed to those of the emperors of Rome or a Napoleon. They, with a record of a dominating will, self-assertive over others; Lincoln's commanding self for the sake of others, a spiritual will based on reason. His powerful chin is flanked on either side by powerful construction reaching like steps of a pyramid from chin to ear, eye to brain, as if his forces took birth in thought within, conceived in architecture without, building to the furthestmost limits of his face, to the fruits of toil in his wonderful hands.

"One of Lincoln's features most expressive of his character are the ears. They are strangely beautiful for a man of his stature. There is no mark of fancy in them but that of fact; nothing of the sensual in either the ears or the face.

"Lincoln's face—what a countenance to study; what a horoscope of the man's noble character, determination and humility. Every line and curve has a meaning—some outward reflection of the being that lived within that body.

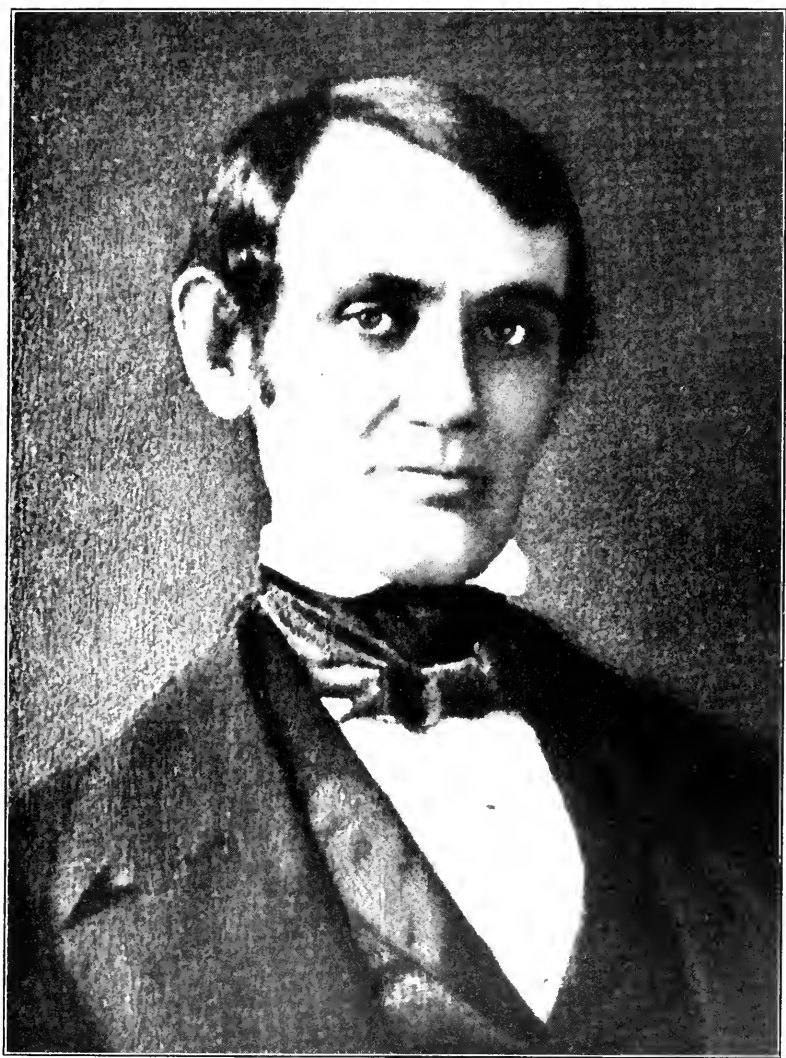
"The eyebrows and forehead are also wondrous things. There are seven horizontal lines in the forehead and four perpendicular ones—a marvelous world of thought behind each delineation."

These strong words from distinguished American sculptors are more than sustained by statements from even more distinguished artists in other lands.

In 1877 Mr. Bartlett took a plaster copy of the Volk mask to Paris to get it cast in bronze. The instant he saw it the founder said, "What a beautiful face! Why, it's more beautiful and has more character than the Abbé's, and we think that is the handsomest one in France. What an extraordinary construction, and what fine forms it has." This he said without knowing whose mask it was.<sup>23</sup>

A number of other sculptors confirmed his opinion and

<sup>23</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 20.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1848

From a photographic copy of the original Daguerreotype owned by Hon.  
Robert T. Lincoln and undoubtedly President Lincoln's first picture.



said: "It is unusual in general construction. It has a new and interesting character and its planes are remarkably beautiful and subtle. If it belongs to any type, it must be a wonderful specimen of that type."<sup>24</sup>

Frémiet, the great sculptor, said: "It seems impossible that a new country like yours should produce such a face. It is unique." This great and learned artist, without any previous knowledge of Lincoln's physical form and guided by the mask, described Lincoln's proportions and movements accurately, and said to Mr. Bartlett, "You have in hand a wonderfully interesting subject. I envy you."<sup>25</sup>

All the French sculptors to whom Bartlett showed the life-mask "admired it for the harmony of the face with itself. Not one of them mentioned any ugliness, coarseness or flabbiness of form."

The best French genre sculptor of modern times, after experimenting with the mask for several months, returned it to Mr. Bartlett and said: "I can do nothing with that head, and I doubt if any one in these times can. The more I studied it the more difficulties I found. The subtle character of its forms is beyond belief. There is no face like it."<sup>25</sup>

Photography is quite as clear and unequivocal as is sculpture in declaring that Abraham Lincoln's features were beautiful and pleasing. His earliest picture is a Daguerreotype taken in 1848 when he was thirty-nine years old. When that picture was first published it produced a profound impression. In all our country and in Europe it was declared to be "the picture of a very handsome man." That judgment has never been reversed nor modified. The picture has the Lincoln features without any of the marks of severe struggles which are seen in later pictures. The features are regular and harmonious and reveal great kindness of heart and strength of purpose. It holds the attention and leaves a vivid and deep impression. It continues to hold its place in public esteem and admiration.

In 1856 Mr. Lincoln visited Princeton, Illinois, for the

<sup>24</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

purpose of delivering a Fourth of July oration. He was, while in that city, the guest of Mr. John Howard Bryant, brother of William Cullen Bryant, the distinguished poet and journalist. During that visit at Princeton, Mr. Lincoln called at the McMasters Studio and sat for his picture, a copy of which was recently presented to me by Mrs. W. E. McVey of Los Angeles, California, a granddaughter of John Howard Bryant. This photograph was taken by the nephew of McMasters who on the Fourth of July, 1856, took the original picture from life. As far as known, this is the only picture we have of Lincoln taken during 1856. Mr. McMasters certifies to the genuineness of this picture and to the foregoing facts concerning its origin. He states that his uncle, who took the original picture, frequently exchanged negatives with Hesler of Chicago which he believes accounts for the resemblance of this picture to one understood to have been taken by the Chicago photographer in 1857. The Hesler picture may have been copied from the one taken by McMasters the year before.

It would be difficult to find a more inspiringly handsome picture than this McMasters photograph. It is a face of faultless structure with animation and high purpose radiating from every feature. It has all the beauty of the earlier picture with far more of character and confidence. Its lines are not deep as in his pictures taken during his Presidency but they form a combination of irresistible charm. It is scarcely less than a cruel travesty to speak or think of such a man as ungainly and awkward.

The alertness shown in this picture is also seen in the photograph taken by Hesler in 1860 soon after Lincoln's nomination as a candidate for President. The great debates with Douglas in 1858, the Ohio speeches, the Cooper Institute address and the tour through New England all occurred between the periods when these two pictures were taken and are all written in his features in this Hesler photograph. These three pictures should be grouped with the Volk bust as they all represent Mr. Lincoln as he appeared when smooth shaven.



#### FIRST PICTURE AS CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT

From the ambrotype taken for Governor M. L. Ward, of New Jersey, May 20, 1860, two days after Lincoln's nomination at Chicago as a candidate for President.

Courtesy Century Company.



#### LAST PICTURE OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

From a photograph taken by H. F. Warren of Waltham, Mass., on south balcony of White House, March 6, 1865

Courtesy Century Company.

(See page 548)



There is a striking resemblance between them, their most distinctive agreement being in the impressive and harmonious beauty of each one.

On the 19th of May, 1860, the day succeeding the one on which Mr. Lincoln was nominated as a candidate for President, Marcus L. Ward, afterward Governor of New Jersey, visited Springfield for the purpose of forming the acquaintance of the nominee, and while there secured an ambrotype of Mr. Lincoln taken at Mr. Ward's request. On the 19th of December, 1881, Governor Ward sent that picture to *The Century Company* for publication in their magazine. In the letter which accompanied the picture, Governor Ward said: "No one, I imagine, will fail to recognize in the expression of the face those noble qualities of the man—honesty, gentleness and kind-heartedness—which so endeared him to all who knew him."<sup>26</sup>

In this picture is one of the best representations we have of Lincoln's hand. The tapering fingers of the hand that rests upon the arm of the chair fully justifies Mr. Bartlett's claim that Lincoln's studies and his production of choice literature had caused the muscular thumb and fingers of the rail-splitter to be transformed into those of a man engaged in literary pursuits. Remembering that this picture was taken before his first election as President one can imagine the further transformation of his hands which was wrought by the production of high-class epistolary and official literature which came from his pen during his Presidency. The hand represented in this picture appears fit and worthy to write the Bixby letter, the Emancipation Proclamation, the Gettysburg Speech, and the Second Inaugural address. It is almost startling to look at that pendant hand with its easy and graceful action.

Having considered the statements of distinguished sculptors concerning Mr. Lincoln's personal appearance, as shown by the life-mask and bust, we will find it highly interesting and instructive to give attention to the opinions of some writers

<sup>26</sup> *Century Magazine*, Vol. 2, p. 852.

and others respecting his personal appearance as shown by some photographs taken after he began to grow a beard. Borglum in telling of his purpose and efforts to get into the Lincoln spirit before attempting to represent him in marble, very frankly says: "I felt that the accepted portraits of him did not justify his record. His life, his labors, his writings made me feel some gross injustice had been done him in the blind, careless use of such phrases as ungainly, uncouth, vulgar, rude, which were commonly applied to him by his contemporaries. These popular descriptions did not fit the master of polished Douglas, nor the man whose 'intellectual arrogance' academic Sumner resented. I did not believe there ever was a grotesque Lincoln. I did not believe the man who could whip his way to the head of a band of ruffians, reason his way to the head of a town meeting, inspire and fire a nation, win and hold the hearts of millions, was gawky or even awkward. No, Lincoln was not an awkward man. I believed he had been falsely drawn. I believed if properly seen and truly read the compelling and enduring greatness of the man would be found written in his own actions, in his figure, in his deportment, in his face, and that some of his compelling greatness might be put into marble."<sup>27</sup>

Referring to the pictures we have of Lincoln, Borglum says: "Through these Lincoln lives, lives as a comfort and reality and an example and living inspiration to every mother and every son in America."

Bartlett says: "To justly understand and appreciate the pictures of Lincoln we shall be obliged to put aside our habitual standard of judgment and pay tribute to the inherent authority of their own physical and mental construction."

The following statement by Noah Brooks of Lincoln's appearance in 1856 should be considered in connection with the McMasters picture taken on the Fourth of July of that year. Mr. Brooks could not have wished for a better illustration of his description of Lincoln's appearance than is this

<sup>27</sup> Everybody's Magazine, Feb., 1910, p. 218.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1860

From an original photograph by Hessler, in Chicago, soon after his nomination,  
and now in the author's collection.

*(See page 66)*



fine picture. And the artist who took the picture could not have wished for a more vivid description of his work than is this statement by Mr. Brooks concerning Mr. Lincoln's appearance. Mr. Brooks states: "When Lincoln was on the stump in '56 his face, though naturally sallow, had a rosy flush. His eyes were full and bright and he was in the fullness of health and vigor."<sup>28</sup>

In connection with the foregoing description of Mr. Lincoln in 1856 Mr. Brooks tells of his appearance in 1862, six years later, as follows: "I shall never forget the shock which my first sight of him gave me in 1862. . . . The light seemed to have gone out of his eyes, which were sunken far under his enormous brows. But there was over his whole face an expression of sadness and a far-away look in the eyes, which were utterly unlike the Lincoln of other days. . . . I was so pained that I could almost have shed tears."

Yet during those six years in spite of the cares and sorrows that so marred his visage by chiselling great lines on all his features and veiling his eyes in a mist of deep melancholy, Mr. Lincoln grew into greater strength and comeliness as Mr. Brooks in the same article says: "I am bound to say that the Lincoln of 1862 did in appearance better become the Presidential office than the Lincoln of 1856 could have done. His form, always angular, was fuller and more dignified; and that noble head, which is to this day the despair of painters and sculptors, appeared far nobler than when I first saw him in Illinois."<sup>29</sup>

Of the picture of Lincoln in McClellan's tent at Antietam Bartlett says: "It is the most unusual and strangely interesting of all the pictures ever taken of him in a sitting position. It is an extreme illustration of good physical centralization. It is sculpturesque in its perfectness as a bas-relief. Yet how humanly expressive in simplicity and directness of the attention which the President is bestowing upon his companion. An essay could be written about it. It is vitally related to

<sup>28</sup> Scribner's Magazine, Vol. 15, p. 562.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 562.

the intellectual and human frame of one of the most wonderful beings that has appeared upon the earth."<sup>30</sup>

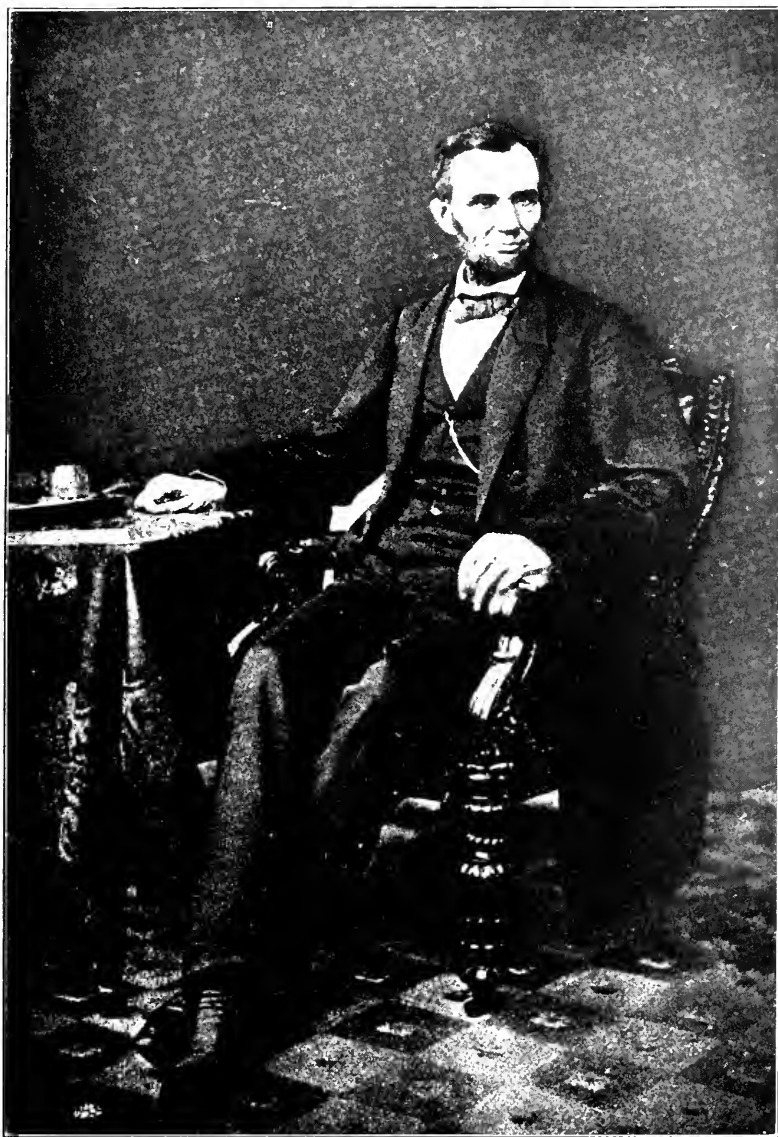
In his comments on several of Lincoln's pictures taken at McClellan's headquarters before Antietam, Bartlett says: "These figures are the most interesting ones I have ever seen of a man standing."

On the 15th of November, 1863, four days before the Gettysburg address, President Lincoln, accompanied by Noah Brooks, visited Gardner's gallery in Washington and sat for a photograph, the negative of which was soon after destroyed. The visit was made upon the photographer's request and Mr. Brooks was present upon the invitation of the President. The picture has proved to be the most remarkable of any full length representation of Lincoln in a sitting position. It is unsurpassed in its presentation of a man of faultless construction and great beauty. This strong statement is justified by the picture itself, as all will agree who give it a careful examination. Mr. Bartlett says of it:

"Until I saw this photograph in Washington, in December, 1874, I supposed that Lincoln was as popularly described. When I first saw it I was amazed at the difference between it and current tradition. It struck me as the most original, easy, dignified, and impressive representation of a man in a sitting position I had ever seen. Years of looking at it and studying it in comparison with many others of the eminent men of modern times have confirmed that impression.

"Still greater confirmation I found in the opinions of three of the greatest sculptors of modern times, Frémiet, Rodin and Aubé; they were astonished at its original and imposing presence. 'It is a new man; he has tremendous character,' they said. Everything about this picture is surprisingly suggestive and admirable. The head in its massiveness, the way it is poised on the shoulders, the lines of the legs and arms, and especially the bend of the body, in spite of the coverings are firm, fine, and easy. The kneepans are not over large or

<sup>30</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, pp. 33, 34, 35.



LINCOLN IN 1863

From a photograph taken in Washington on November 15, 1863, a few days before he delivered the Gettysburg address.



shapeless, nor do the hands show any incongruity in mass, line, or movement. There is nothing in the hang of the clothes or their lines and folds that indicates anything but a well-shaped form beneath. No monarch ever sat with more natural grace and dignity.

"The simple, easy line of the hand on the table, and that made by the foot and leg and the bend of the knee, suggest quite the opposite of clumsy and awkwardly constructed or moving articulations. It is a great portrait,—a great ready-made statue or picture. As such it ranks with the best portraits in any art, and as far as I know it is absolutely unique; again, as such, it means that Lincoln's mind and body not only worked together in perfect physical harmony, but exemplified a dignified and gracious ease. He made his own statue. It is his actual presence, the very life of the man.

"There are many other significant details in this sitting portrait, of which a few may be mentioned. The legs are kept well together. Every action of legs, arms, hands and feet is decisive, completing its intention, and all in natural harmony. This is a very important and significant fact, so much so that it may be taken as an ample starting point for a full consideration of Lincoln's intellectual construction. So definite is the completion of intention that the right foot is placed fully upon the floor, and the full length of the other foot is also prone upon the floor. The position of these feet shows not only a flexible but a well-formed articulation. This flexibility of ankle joints permits the left foot to fall down, and thus not only saves it from being awkward by pointing up into the air, as nine hundred and ninety-nine feet in a thousand would do, but makes a fine line in connection with the leg. The size and character of Lincoln's feet, as shown through his boots, are in admirable accord with his body. They are well and forcibly formed, and of noticeable importance as a constructive fact.

"In none of the sitting views is there any sign of a disposition to sprawl or spread around, as the majority of men

do when sitting. No member, like the hands, for instance, is obtrusive. These facts indicate natural elegance, high style in bodily action, and a concentrative physical economy in accordance with the beauty and character of Lincoln's mind."<sup>31</sup>

The best front view of Lincoln is supposed to have been taken on the 9th of March, 1864, the day General Grant received from him a commission as Lieutenant-General. During the afternoon of the day on which that important event occurred it is claimed the President accompanied General Grant to a gallery where each sat for his photograph. The front view picture of Lincoln then taken was not given to the public for many years after his death when the untouched negative was accidentally discovered and, as Colonel A. K. McClure states, "copies were printed from it without a single change in the lines or features of Lincoln's face. It therefore presents Lincoln true to life." From the time of its appearance it has taken first place among the pictures of Lincoln, receiving the highest praise from most competent judges and being by artists made the basis for engravings and other representations of the President. Colonel McClure says: "This is the only perfect copy of his face I have ever seen in any picture."

Bartlett declares this to be "the best front view of Lincoln," and "as a whole it is probably the most impressively proportioned picture ever taken of Lincoln. It is all strange. In no respect like any other head. It is a large one, not in inches, but in construction,—a head that will hold its own in space, in the open air. In this rare respect it belongs to the few faces that are inherently decorative. It must be estimated by a standard authorized by itself. No such eyes were ever seen in mortal head, and no such setting was ever given to any other eyes." *Portraits of Lincoln*, p. 29.

All of the great French sculptors whom Mr. Bartlett consulted extolled Lincoln's face and features as shown in this picture quite as strongly as they did those which are seen in

<sup>31</sup> *Portraits of Lincoln*, pp. 32, 33.

the life-mask. The spell of Lincoln's picture upon great minds is shown in a statement made by George William Curtis to Dr. Andrew D. White, during the republican national convention of 1884. Dr. White tells of the incident as follows: "As we came into the convention on the morning of the day fixed for making the nominations, I noticed that the painted portraits of Washington and Lincoln, previously on either side of the president's chair, had been removed. Owing to the tumultuous conduct of the crowd in the galleries, it had been found best to remove things of an ornamental nature from the walls, for some of these ornaments had been thrown down, to the injury of those sitting below.

"On my calling Curtis's attention to the removal of the two portraits, he said: 'Yes, I noticed it, and I am glad of it. Those weary eyes of Lincoln have been upon us here during our whole stay, and I am glad that they are not to see the work that is to be done here to-day.' It was a curious exhibition of sentiment, a revelation of the deep poetic feeling which was so essential an element in Curtis's noble character."<sup>32</sup>

Other statements relative to Lincoln's harmonious, impressive and pleasing physical construction as shown by art from the authors herein quoted, and from other competent judges, could be given indefinitely, but the foregoing are deemed sufficient, if duly considered, to accomplish the end sought, and are fittingly followed by the following forcible declaration by Borglum: "Lincoln's face is infinitely nearer an expression of our Christ character than all the conventional pictures of the 'Son of God.' That symbolic head, with its long hair parted in the middle and features that never lived, is the creation of artists, Lincoln's face the triumph of God through man and of men through God. One fancy; the other, truth at labor, Lincoln, the song of democracy written by God."

The foregoing statements relative to Lincoln's appearance as shown by the life-mask, bust and pictures, are fully confirmed by equally strong declarations of persons who were

<sup>32</sup> Autobiography, Vol. 1, pp. 203, 204.

closely associated with him or had occasionally met him. Nicolay says: "Seated and viewed from the chest up, he is fine looking. His forehead is high and full, and swells out grandly. His face even in repose was not unattractive, and when lit up by his open, genial smile, or illuminated in the utterance of a strong or stirring thought, his countenance was positively handsome.

"The question of looks depended in Lincoln's case very much upon his moods. The large framework of his features was greatly modified by the emotions which controlled them. In a countenance of strong lines and rugged masses like Lincoln's, the lift of an eyebrow, the curve of a lip, the flash of an eye, the movements of prominent muscles created a much wider facial play than in rounded immobile countenances. Lincoln's features were the despair of every artist who undertook his portrait."<sup>33</sup>

In speaking of the impression made by Lincoln upon the distinguished men who met him, Nicolay wrote: "The eyes of these men were not upon the tailor's suit of broadcloth, but upon the President and the man, and in such a scrutiny Lincoln outranked any mortal whoever questioned him eye to eye in his long and strange career from New Salem to the Blue Room of the White House."<sup>34</sup>

F. B. Carpenter, the artist, who spent six months in the White House, while painting the famous picture of Lincoln and his Cabinet, and made a careful and scientific study of the President's features, says: "His eyes were bluish gray in color, —always in deep shadow, however, from the upper lids, which were unusually heavy, and the expression was remarkably pensive and tender, often inexpressibly sad, as if the reservoir of tears lay very near the surface."<sup>35</sup>

H. C. Deming states that "Lincoln's eyes were bright, soft, and beautiful," and that his smile was "radiant, captivating and winning as was ever given to mortal."

<sup>33</sup> Century Magazine, Vol. 20, p. 933.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 937.

<sup>35</sup> Six Months in the White House.

James R. Gilmore says: "His was the deepest, saddest, kindest eye I have ever seen in a human being. I never knew a smile so positively captivating. It transfigured his whole face, making his plain features actually good looking, so that I could agree with Caroline M. Kirkland, who not long before had told me that he was the handsomest man she had ever seen."<sup>36</sup>

Andrew D. White, in describing his first meeting with President Lincoln, says: "As he came toward us in a sort of awkward, perfunctory manner his face seemed to me one of the saddest I had ever seen and when he reached us he held out his hand to the first stranger, then to the second, and so on, all with the air of a melancholy automaton. But suddenly, some one in the company said something which amused him, and instantly there came in his face a most marvelous transformation. I have never seen anything like it in any other human being. His features were lighted, his eyes radiant."<sup>37</sup>

In connection with the foregoing account of the transformation of President Lincoln's countenance, Dr. White continues: "Years afterward, noticing in the rooms of his son, Mr. Robert T. Lincoln, our minister at London, a portrait of his father, and seeing that it had the same melancholy look noticeable in all President Lincoln's portraits, I alluded to this change in his father's features, and asked if any artist had ever caught the happier expression. Mr. Robert Lincoln answered that, so far as he knew, no portrait of his father in this better mood had ever been taken; that when any attempt was made to photograph him or paint his portrait, he relapsed into his melancholy mood, and that this is what has been transmitted to us by all who have ever attempted to give us his likeness."<sup>38</sup>

This explains in part one of the reasons for the general impression that Mr. Lincoln's features were exceedingly plain. He was from early life of a deeply melancholy nature and his

<sup>36</sup> *Personal Recollections*, p. 77.

<sup>37</sup> *Autobiography*, Vol. I, p. 121.

<sup>38</sup> *Autobiography of Andrew D. White*, Vol. I, pp. 121, 122.

depressing meditations caused his comely features to be sometimes shrouded in gloom. Hon. George D. Boutwell says: "There was at all times when he was not engaged in conversation, a sadness of expression in Mr. Lincoln's countenance which was very pathetic."<sup>39</sup>

Judge Henry C. Whitney says: "The child (Lincoln) was often sad and serious. With the earliest dawn of reason, he began to suffer and endure."<sup>40</sup>

"No element of Lincoln's character was so marked, obvious and ingrained as his mysterious and profound melancholy. My attention was first drawn to this sad characteristic, which surprised me greatly at the time, in the spring of 1855, at the Bloomington Circuit court. I was sitting with John T. Stuart, while a case was being tried, and our conversation was, at the moment, about Lincoln, when Stuart remarked that he was a hopeless victim of melancholy. I expressed surprise, to which Stuart replied: 'Look at him, now.' I turned a little and there beheld Lincoln sitting alone in the corner of the bar, most remote from any one, wrapped in abstraction and gloom. It was a sad but interesting study for me, and I watched him for some time. It appeared as if he was pursuing in his mind some specific, sad subject, regularly and systematically, through various sinuosities, and his sad face would assume, at times, deeper phases of grief; but no relief came from dark and despairing melancholy till he was roused by the breaking up of court, when he emerged from his cave of gloom and came back, like one awakened from sleep, to the world in which he lived, again."<sup>41</sup>

This natural tendency to sorrowful meditations was strengthened by being indulged as it was by Mr. Lincoln. His efforts for temperance reform so enlisted his sympathies for the drunkard and for those dependent upon him, and so filled him with despair as he contemplated the character and

<sup>39</sup> *Tributes*, p. 68.

<sup>40</sup> *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*, p. 140.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

strength of the liquor traffic that his tendencies to melancholy became more active and potential in his nature and life. Then came the struggle with Douglas which brought him face to face with the evils of slavery and the governmental and religious aspects of that institution tended greatly to increase his disquietude of heart and mind. To all this was added his all-dominating sense of responsibility when he was called to the Presidency and his unspeakable anguish of soul during the rebellion that followed. Referring to this Mr. Nicolay says: "About two weeks before Mr. Lincoln left Springfield for Washington, a deep-seated melancholy seemed to take possession of his soul. . . . The former Mr. Lincoln was no longer visible to me. His face was transformed from mobility into an iron mask."<sup>42</sup>

Carpenter tells of his observations while painting the famous Emancipation picture as follows: "Lines of care plowed his face, the hollows in his cheeks and under his eyes being very marked. Absorbed in his papers, he would become unconscious of my presence, while I intently studied every line and shade of expression in that furrowed face. In repose, it was the saddest face I ever knew. There were days when I could scarcely look into it without crying. During the first week of the battles of the Wilderness he scarcely slept at all. Passing through the main hall of the domestic apartment on one of these days, I met him, clad in a long morning wrapper, pacing back and forth a narrow passage leading to one of the windows, his hands behind him, great black rings under his eyes, his head bent forward upon his breast,—altogether such a picture of the effects of sorrow, care and anxiety as would have melted the hearts of the worst of his adversaries, who so mistakenly applied to him the epithets of tyrant and usurper. With a sorrow almost divine, he, too, could have said of the rebellious states, 'How often would I have gathered you together, even as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!' Like another

<sup>42</sup> The Century, Vol. 20, p. 933.

Jeremiah, he wept over the desolation of the nation; he mourned the slain of the daughters of his people."<sup>43</sup>

Carpenter further says: "All familiar with him will remember the weary air which became habitual during his last years. This was more of the mind than the body, and no rest and recreation which he allowed himself could relieve it. As he sometimes expressed it, the remedy 'seemed never to reach the tired spot.'"<sup>44</sup>

Noah Brooks writes as follows of Lincoln's looks when he received information of the Chancellorsville disaster: "I shall never forget that picture of despair. He held a telegram in his hand, and as he closed the door and came forward toward us, I mechanically noticed that his face, usually sallow, was ashen in hue."<sup>45</sup>

John Hay says of Lincoln's labors and sufferings: "Under this frightful ordeal his demeanor and disposition changed—so gradually that it would be impossible to say when the change began; but he was in mind, body and nerves a very different man at the second inauguration from the one who had taken the oath in 1861. He continued always the same kindly, genial and cordial spirit he had been at first; but the boisterous laughter became less frequent year by year; the eye grew veiled by constant meditation on momentous subjects; the air of reserve and detachment from his surroundings increased. He aged with great rapidity.

"The change is shown with startling distinctness by two life-masks—the one made by Leonard W. Volk in Chicago, in April, 1860, the other by Clark Mills in Washington, in the spring of 1865. The first is a man of fifty-one, and young for his years. The other is so sad and peaceful in its infinite repose that the famous sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, insisted, when he first saw it, that it was a death mask. The lines are set, as if the living face, like the copy, had been in bronze; the nose is thin and lengthened by the emaciation of

<sup>43</sup> *Six Months in the White House*, pp. 30, 31.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217.

<sup>45</sup> *Washington in Lincoln's Day*, p. 57.

the cheeks; the mouth is fixed like that of an archaic statue; a look as of one on whom sorrow and care had done their worst without victory is on all the features; the whole expression is of unspeakable sadness and all-sufficing strength. Yet the peace is not the dreadful peace of death; it is the peace that passeth understanding."<sup>46</sup>

Lincoln's native tendency to melancholy and his terrible experiences of anxiety and sorrow wrote their records very legibly upon his strong, handsome features. They were nearly all surface records which vanished as by magic at the entrance of animation or pleasure, but they remained as characteristic of Lincoln's features in the recollection of persons who saw him and never had the good fortune to see him smile. Many such saw the expression in his face of his heart's unutterable anxiety and anguish and did not discover the beauty of the face itself. The unfortunate impressions this produced have been written into history and have gone into popular belief through the malice of some and the inexcusable carelessness of others. As an illustration of the seeming indifference to truth of some writers I will state that there now lies before me a copy of a widely circulated magazine in which appears a picture of the Volk life-mask, beneath which is printed the following: "Life-mask of Abraham Lincoln, made by Douglas Volk at the White House, in 1863." In that brief sentence there are four distinct and definite statements only one of which is true, and three of which are inexcusably false. The picture is that of the life-mask of Lincoln, but it was not made by Douglas Volk, but by his father Leonard W. Volk. It was not made in the White House but in Chicago, and it was not made in 1863 but in 1860. Those errors, while not seriously harmful to the memory of Lincoln, are misleading because they are not true to the facts they assume to state and they are representative of the many slovenly statements by which the public has been led to believe that Abraham Lincoln was gawky, homely and awkward.

<sup>46</sup> Century Magazine, Vol. 19, p. 37.

The statements already set forth relative to Lincoln's attire when he delivered the Cooper Institute speech, and similar statements which have appeared in books, pamphlets, magazines and newspapers are illustrative of the unfortunate habit of some writers to reproduce in their publications, without verification, disparaging statements which others have made concerning him.

We have covered a wide range, and have shown how inexcusable are all disparaging statements relative to Lincoln's personal appearance when reproduced by present-day writers. There was a time when written descriptions were our only source of information as to Lincoln's looks. There was then some excuse for the belief and statement that he was homely, but that excuse no longer exists since the "infallible" testimony of art in sculpture and photography have settled the question of his personal appearance beyond the possibility of error or uncertainty.

In the past, many statements by people who had met Lincoln were published and were unfortunately misleading in their influence upon the thought of the later generations. But now, whoever wishes to know whether Lincoln was fine looking or homely has but to consult his life-mask bust or one of his first-class photographs. And the world is now doing that with most satisfactory results. Replicas of that bust are being multiplied and are going into schools, offices and homes, while Lincoln's photographs are becoming plentiful in all the nation and throughout the world.

Thus the unfortunate errors of the past are being corrected and Lincoln is coming into his own. Persons who knew him well understand why when he was living, he was so generally regarded as homely. He had just one unattractive feature—his lower lip was too thick to be in perfect harmony with his other features. With most people that lip was the first feature seen upon coming into his presence and it usually produced the impression that he was of uncomely visage.

My own impressions when I first met him in all prob-

ability were similar to those experienced by others when first seeing him at close range. It was at a large gathering and he was receiving the greetings of many admiring friends. As I approached the company there was an opening in the group directly before me and I saw him at full length. Because of the distance between us I could not distinguish his features but his great height and symmetrical proportions together with his massive head, thickly covered with bushy black hair, gave him an imposing and admirable personal appearance. He stood squarely and firmly on both feet which were near together. He was erect and his bearing and movements were impressively dignified and graceful. His presence seemed august but very attractive, and I yearned to feel the grasp of his hand and to hear his voice uttering words of greeting. But as I approached him and looked into his face that lower lip attracted and held my attention and instantly produced the unwelcome and depressing impression that he was very homely. At that first view I saw his entire face as he appears in the front view photograph before mentioned, and that one slightly uncomely feature caused all his face to seem to be unattractive and even homely. Had I seen him but that once I would surely have carried away the false impression then produced. But when a few moments later I looked a second time and from a different viewpoint, his lower lip was concealed from view by the heads of people standing near him, and I could see only those features above his mouth as they are seen in the partly covered copy of the famous front view photograph and he appeared most thrillingly comely and attractive.

After that first meeting with Mr. Lincoln I saw him many times but I never again noticed that lower lip. My view of his face with that feature concealed, as before stated, so transfixed my whole being that from that time whenever I looked upon his face I saw only the comely features. I made no effort, for it required no effort, to have it so. I simply did not see the uncomely feature. I could not see it so entranced

was I by the vision of the strength and beauty of his face which at first I did not recognize.

Upon other occasions I studied his face with the care and diligence of an enthusiastic young learner, but that lip did not again come under my observation or my thought during the period of my association with him. But the recollection of my impressions when I first met him assure me that his heavy lower lip was responsible for the belief that he was extremely homely.

But, as Bartlett says, "It is to be remembered that the right kind of a thick lower lip is a physiognomical mark of sensitiveness and tenderness of nature."<sup>47</sup>

This statement of the distinguished sculptor is peculiarly applicable to Abraham Lincoln. His habits of profound and prolonged meditation usually resulted in painful melancholy which never failed to be revealed in the expressions of his countenance. And the lower lip was the one feature that most fully and faithfully disclosed the anguish of his soul and it therefore grew into an expressive symbol of the great tenderness of his nature and his deep sympathy with human suffering and sorrow.

Had Lincoln's melancholy been accompanied by a spirit of resentment or of self-assertion and defense that lip would have been held firm in its place and kept thin as were the lips of Jackson, who also knew anxiety and sorrow but was never despondent nor tenderly sympathetic. Lincoln's depression arose from the kindness of his heart and his deep and tender sympathy and hence "his plainest feature," as Carpenter designates his mouth, was "expressive of much firmness and gentleness."

<sup>47</sup> Portraits of Lincoln, p. 25.



### WHY PEOPLE THOUGHT LINCOLN HOMELY

These two pictures from the famous photograph taken March 9, 1864, show that the protruding lower lip was wholly responsible for the opinion that Lincoln was homely. With that lip concealed the features are strikingly handsome.

(See pag-72)



### III

#### THE JAQUESS-GILMORE MISSION \*

**T**O the re-election of Abraham Lincoln as President, and the final overthrow of the Rebellion, the Jaquess-Gilmore Embassy of 1863-64 contributed more largely than did any other single effort of individuals, or any one achievement or act of the Government during that period.

Having been an active participant in the struggles of that Presidential campaign and having given the history of that mission careful consideration for more than half a century, I have no hesitation in saying that the disclosures secured by that embassy and widely published at the crisis hour of that contest, turned the tide of battle and saved the nation from the ruinous defeat of President Lincoln and the dissolution of the Union.

The story of that unique mission and of its decisive influence in the Presidential campaign is here told with painstaking fidelity and, to be rightfully appreciated, it should be read in its entirety. The hero of that embassy,

COLONEL JAMES F. JAQUESS,

of the 73rd Illinois Volunteers, was a rare man. He lived with his head above the clouds while his feet were on solid ground; he lived in the eternal while he wrought with tremendous force in the activities of earth. He was a prominent minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and a distinguished college president before the Rebellion, and in the pulpit he was a Boanerges, a "Son of Thunder," and his

\*All the quotations in this Chapter which are not otherwise designated, are from "Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War," by Mr. James R. Gilmore, and appear in this volume by permission of his publishers, L. C. Page & Company, of Boston, Mass.

gospel messages were like oral proclamations by Jehovah. He seemed to live in constant fellowship with the Most High, and to be an utter stranger to worldly considerations and motives while obeying the commands of God. He was as loving and gentle as a devoted mother in dealing with the weak and erring, but he would dash with fearless fury into battle as if hurled by an invisible catapult against the forces of unrighteousness. To him the entreaties of the gospel, the denunciations of the law, and the violence of war, were alike the agencies of God in the furtherance of His cause.

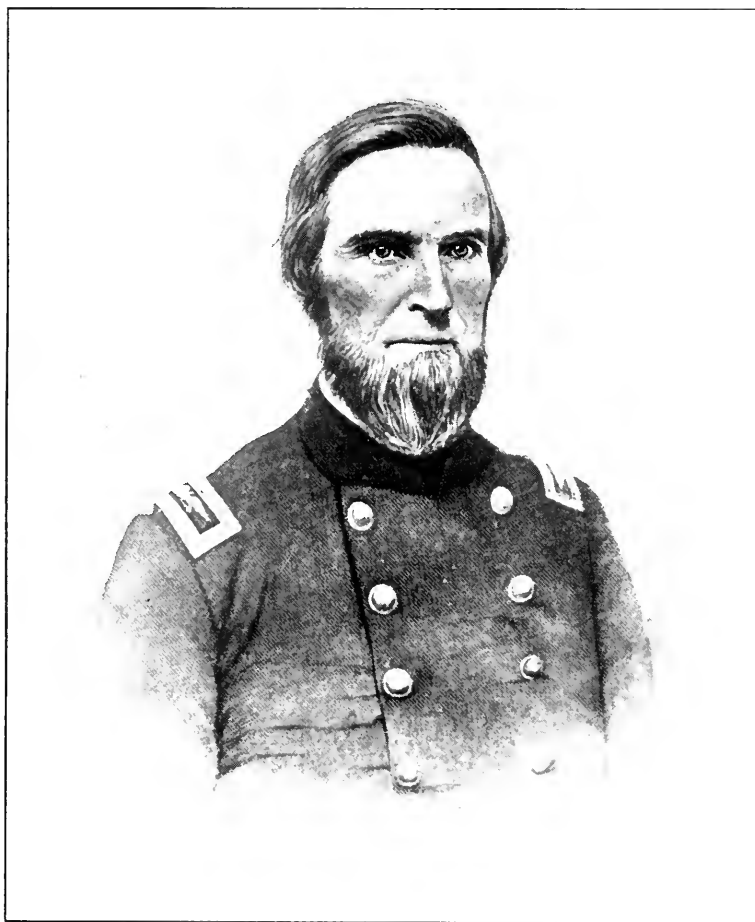
President Lincoln had for more than twenty-five years known Colonel Jaquess as a very successful minister of the gospel, and when in May, 1863, he first learned of the proposed Embassy of Peace, he said: "I know Jaquess well. He is remarkably level-headed. I never knew a man more so." He "is cool, deliberate, God-fearing, of exceptional sagacity and worldly wisdom."

General W. S. Rosecrans, who at the time was in command of the Army of the Cumberland, with headquarters at Murfreesboro, Tenn., in conversation with Mr. James R. Gilmore, spoke of Colonel Jaquess as "one of my best and bravest officers." "As to his life, he takes the right view about it. He considers it already given to the country. If you had seen him at Stone River you would think so." "He is a hero, John Brown and Chevalier Bayard rolled into one, and polished up with common sense and a knowledge of Greek, Latin and the mathematics."<sup>1</sup>

Colonel Jaquess as he appeared at the time of making his proposition is described as "a little above the medium height, with gray hair and beard, and high, open forehead, and a thin marked face expressing great earnestness, strength and benignity of character."

General James A. Garfield, afterwards President, said of Colonel Jaquess: "He is most solemnly in earnest and has great confidence in the result of his mission."

<sup>1</sup> James R. Gilmore, "Down in Tennessee," p. 240.



COLONEL JAMES F. JAQUESS

The hero of the Jaquess-Gilmore Mission.

Courtesy L. C. Page & Company, Boston.



## COLONEL JAQUESS' PROPOSITION

On May 19th, 1863, Colonel Jaquess at Murfreesboro, Tenn., requested permission to visit Richmond, for the purpose, as he said, of securing from Jefferson Davis and those associated with him in the Confederate Government, "terms of peace that the Government will accept." This application was first made to General Garfield, who, at the time, was chief-of-staff to General Rosecrans, in whose army Colonel Jaquess was serving. General Garfield approved of the proposed mission of peace and submitted Colonel Jaquess' request to General Rosecrans.

Of his proposed mission Colonel Jaquess said: "I want to go to them (the Confederates) to offer them the olive branch; to tell them in the name of God and the country that they will be welcomed back. . . . I do not know what their views are; it is not my business to ask. I feel that God has laid upon me the duty to go to them and go I must, unless my superiors forbid it.

"I propose no compromise with traitors, but their immediate return to their allegiance to God and their country. It is no part of my business to discuss the probability or the possibility of the accomplishment of this work."

When asked how he would go, Colonel Jaquess said: "Openly, in my uniform as the messenger of God." When told that he might be shot as a spy, he said: "It is not for me to ask what they will do. I have only to go." When told that his life was too valuable to be wasted on such an Embassy he replied: "That is not for you to judge."

It will be observed that Colonel Jaquess' proposition was not to go to the Confederate leaders, in the name or by the authority of the Government of the United States, but in the name of the Lord God Almighty, and in His name and by His authority, to demand of those leaders a cessation of hostilities and a submission to the authority of the Government. In all his letters and in his conversation relative to the matter he

states his motive and purpose in unequivocal and unqualified terms.

It is interesting to note what Mr. Lincoln and others who encouraged this mission hoped that it might accomplish. General Rosecrans in introducing this matter to the President said: "After maturely weighing his plans and considering well his character, I am decidedly of the opinion that the public interests will be promoted by permitting him to go as he proposes. I do not anticipate the results that he seems to expect; but I believe that a moral force will be generated by his mission that will more than compensate us for his temporary absence from his regiment." "The terms he will offer may not be accepted, but it will strengthen our moral position to offer them. It will show the world that we do not seek to subjugate the South."

During his first interview with Mr. Gilmore relative to this mission, late in May, 1863, President Lincoln said: "Something will come out of it, perhaps not what Jaquess expects, but what will be of service to the right."

These preliminary statements respecting Colonel Jaquess and his proposition are here made for the purpose of showing that the hero of this mission was not a religious fanatic, as his strange proposition might seem to indicate, but was a man of such exalted nature and practical common sense as to be held in high esteem by President Lincoln and other prominent men.

MR. JAMES R. GILMORE,

who was identified with the Jaquess Mission from the first, who accompanied the Colonel on his second trip to the South, in July, 1864, was with him during the interview with Jefferson Davis, and in his excellent work above referred to gives the history of this mission, was a man of exceptional worth and reputation. His ability as a lecturer and author, and his great sacrifices and labors for the Union cause gave him high standing with President Lincoln and with leading

men throughout the nation. He was a distinguished magazine writer and publisher, and was one of Horace Greeley's most intimate and trusted editorial associates, and at the time of the Jaquess-Gilmore embassy, he was on the editorial staff of the *New York Tribune*. When this mission was first proposed by Colonel Jaquess in May, 1863, Mr. Gilmore was with General Rosecrans at the headquarters of the Army of the Cumberland, at Murfreesboro, Tenn., on an important mission for Mr. Greeley.

It is fortunate that two men of such exceptional character and integrity, so utterly unlike and yet forming such a combination of rare excellence as did Colonel Jaquess and Mr. Gilmore, were united in this important movement, and that from the one most fitted for that service we have a history of the affair, so trustworthy and complete, and so full of thrilling interest and instruction, as is the story of this movement in Mr. Gilmore's "Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln."

General Rosecrans was compelled to be at the front during the day Colonel Jaquess' application of May 19th, 1863, was received, and, therefore, requested Mr. Gilmore to meet the Colonel, who was to call at headquarters that day, to hear his proposition and report his impressions relative to the matter. It was in this way that Mr. Gilmore was brought into this movement.

When General Rosecrans returned from the front to his headquarters Mr. Gilmore reported to the General and expressed to him his disapproval of the Jaquess' proposition. But General Rosecrans knew Colonel Jaquess as Mr. Gilmore did not; he had seen him in camp, in counsel, and in battle, and disregarding Mr. Gilmore's unfavorable recommendations, General Rosecrans wired President Lincoln stating in brief Colonel Jaquess' proposition, and requesting for him a furlough and passes to carry out his mission.

## 88 LATEST LIGHT ON ABRAHAM LINCOLN

### THE PRESIDENT'S REFUSAL AND REQUEST

In response to this request the President at once sent General Rosecrans the following telegram:<sup>2</sup>

Washington, May 21st, 1863, 4:40 P.M.

Major-General Rosecrans:

For certain reasons it is thought best for Rev. Dr. Jaquess not to come here. Present my respects to him and ask him to write me fully on the subject he has in contemplation.

A. LINCOLN.

There is great significance in the above request by President Lincoln for fuller information respecting Colonel Jaquess' proposition. He was burdened almost beyond endurance with cares and duties which he could not put aside, and from which he could not be relieved, and he was constantly besieged by persons making requests, to which he could not possibly give attention. Well-meaning people of all classes were persistently commending to him utterly impracticable schemes for the prosecution of the war or the hastening of peace; and yet in the midst of this avalanche of suggestions and requests, Mr. Lincoln saw in this seemingly absurd proposition of Colonel Jaquess something which arrested and held his attention, and so awakened his deep interest as to cause him to ask for full information relative to the matter.

This most remarkable request of the busy, burdened and almost distracted President has a double meaning. It bears witness to Mr. Lincoln's constant attitude of religious expectancy. With all his heart and soul he believed that God had chosen him to lead the nation at this period of appalling peril and that He would guide him in a work as difficult as ever taxed the efforts and energies of man. And he was constantly alert in listening for the inner voice and in watching for any

<sup>2</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 280.

indications by which the Most High would reveal to him his path of duty. Never could it be more truly said of any human being than could at this time be said of Abraham Lincoln that his eyes waited upon the Lord "As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress"<sup>3</sup> so that when this Jaquess proposition came to him, like the midnight visit of a heavenly messenger, it found him eager to learn its purport.

He believed that he was being led of God, and that the nation with all its interests was also under divine guardianship and guidance; but there was great darkness throughout the land. There was probably no period during the war when the outlook in the field was more unpromising than at this time in the early summer of 1863. To his watchful eye there appeared no dawning of a day of glad deliverance; to his listening ear there came no voice of divine assurance or encouragement. But Mr. Lincoln's faith was based upon the promises of God and he believed that at His own time, and in His own way, the Almighty would interpose and bring deliverance to the nation. Hence, on that 20th day of May, 1863, when he received from General Rosecrans a brief telegraphic statement of Colonel Jaquess' proposition, he was hopeful that the Lord had given to this Christian soldier the message for which he was anxiously listening. The sublime religious character of the proposition and the confidence in God which it indicated elicited Mr. Lincoln's deep interest and awakened his ardent sympathy with the proposed movement.

But quite as potent to arouse and stimulate the interest of the President as the proposition of Colonel Jaquess was Colonel Jaquess himself. Mr. Lincoln believed thoroughly in his sagacity, courage and faith. He knew with what masterly ability, wisdom and resourcefulness he, as pastor, had wrought in Springfield, and he was predisposed to give credence to his claim that God had put upon his heart the prosecution of this strange embassy of peace. Mr. Lincoln knew

<sup>3</sup> Psal. 123 : 2.

that Colonel Jaquess "walked with God," as few men of his acquaintance did, and that his close and constant communion with his Master enabled him to hear His whispered words of confidential counsel and instruction as did the beloved disciple who leaned upon the Saviour's breast.

There is more than confidence and esteem, there is strong and tender affection in Mr. Lincoln's request, "Give my respects to him." That simple sentence as Mr. Lincoln used it has in it a whole volume of meaning.

But Mr. Lincoln was apprehensive that if Colonel Jaquess' proposed embassy of peace received the signet of his approval as President it would have the appearance of an official recognition of the Confederate authorities as a separate government with which he was conducting negotiations for peace; and even the appearance of such a recognition he was steadfastly and consistently determined to avoid.

Because of that determination to which he continuously adhered Mr. Lincoln declined to grant Colonel Jaquess' request for permission to visit Washington. It is significant, however, that while refusing to confer with Colonel Jaquess personally relative to his proposition, he did not refuse to encourage and aid the proposed embassy of peace. In this, as in all of President Lincoln's relations to this movement, there was revealed his double purpose of having Colonel Jaquess visit Richmond as he proposed, but of having him do so without any manifestation of governmental approval. These two purposes so seemingly in conflict, and yet so fully in accord, are seen at every stage of these proceedings. To accomplish these two results Mr. Lincoln made provision in his first telegram to General Rosecrans relative to the matter, by requesting Colonel Jaquess to explain his purposes in writing while declining to permit him to visit Washington in the interest of the movement.

When, on May 21st, 1863, General Rosecrans received the telegram from President Lincoln declining to grant Colonel Jaquess' request, and asking for written information

relative to his proposition, he at once forwarded to the President Colonel Jaquess' letter of May 19th, and at the same time sent the President's telegram to the Colonel at the headquarters of his regiment in Murfreesboro.

General Rosecrans evidently expected that when Colonel Jaquess confronted Mr. Lincoln's prompt refusal of his request, he would abandon his proposed mission; but he had not yet fully measured the unyielding determination of this consecrated Christian soldier, nor the extent to which his mind and heart were set upon the prosecution of this mission. The determination of Colonel Jaquess to prosecute this mission was like a mountain stream which rises higher and higher until it pours its crystal waters over the dam which is erected to arrest its progress. It was augmented rather than diminished by the President's refusal. Nothing could have been more characteristic of the Colonel than his answer to the General's intimation that because of the President's refusal to grant his request the work could not be prosecuted; and his insisting that the General's request for the furlough and passes should be renewed and that Mr. Gilmore personally should visit the President and urge him to consent to the movement. This suggestion seemed so preposterous to Mr. Gilmore that according to his own statement he burst into a hearty laugh, by which he intended to indicate his unwillingness to engage in such a mission. But he was instantly sobered by General Rosecrans' prompt reply: "Yes, that is it. You *must* go." So, arrangements were made for Mr. Gilmore to visit the President at Washington, and personally to hand him a letter addressed to him from Colonel Jaquess, together with the following letter from General Rosecrans:

Headquarters Department of the Cumberland,

Murfreesboro, Tenn., May 21st, 1863.

To his Excellency, the President of the United States:

The Rev. Dr. Jaquess, Colonel commanding the 73rd Illinois, a man of character, has submitted to me a letter

proposing a personal mission to the South. After maturely weighing his plans, and considering well his character, I am decidedly of opinion that the public interests will be promoted by permitting him to go as he proposes.

I do not anticipate the results that he seems to expect, but I believe a moral force will be generated by his mission that will more than compensate us for his temporary absence from his regiment.

His letter is herein enclosed, and the bearer of this, Mr. Gilmore, can fully explain Colonel Jaquess' plans and purposes.

Very respectfully,  
W. S. ROSECRANS, Major-General.

This letter to the President was written by General Rosecrans on May 21st, 1863, after he had received Mr. Lincoln's telegram of the same date, and had held a conference with Mr. Gilmore and the Colonel relative to its contents. Colonel Jaquess' letter to the President was dated two days later, and is as follows:

Murfreesboro, Tenn., May 23, 1863.

Hon. A. Lincoln, President, U. S. A.:

My dear Sir—This, with other papers, will be handed to you by Mr. Gilmore, who has been introduced to me by General Rosecrans. Mr. G. will explain to you in full what I propose to do. Meanwhile, should you feel that my proposition is too strong, and cannot be realized, I would say, I may not be able to reach the specific object stated in the proposition, but the mission cannot fail to accomplish great good.

It is a fact well known to me and others, perhaps to yourself, that much sympathy exists in the minds of many good people, both in this country and England, for the South, on the ground of their professed piety. They say, "Mr. Davis is a praying man," "many of his people are devotedly pious," etc., etc. Now, you will admit that, if they hear me, I have gained a point. On the other hand, if Mr. Davis and his asso-

ciates in rebellion refuse me, coming to them in the name of the Lord on a mission of peace, the question of their piety is settled at once and forever. Should I be treated with violence, and cast into prison, shot or hanged—which may be part of my mission—then the doom of the Southern Confederacy is sealed on earth and in heaven forever. My dear Mr. Lincoln will excuse me when I say that I am ready for any emergency, and though not Samson, I should, like him, slay more at my death than in all my life at the head of my regiment. No, the mission cannot fail. God's hand is in it. I am not seeking a martyr's crown, but simply to meet the duty that has been laid upon me.

I have talked freely with Mr. Gilmore, and he will explain to you more fully, if you desire. To him I would refer you, and with my best wishes and prayers, I am, dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

JAMES F. JAQUESS,

Colonel Com'd'g 73d Illinois Infantry.

With the foregoing letters from General Rosecrans and from Colonel Jaquess, Mr. Gilmore, at the General's request, proceeded to Washington; but travel in those war times was very difficult and slow, and before he reached that city, President Lincoln had received, by mail, Colonel Jaquess' letter of May 19th, and on the 28th had written General Rosecrans saying: "Such a mission as he proposes I think promises good if it were free from difficulties, which I fear it cannot be. First he cannot go with any Government authority whatever. This is absolute and imperative. Secondly, if he goes without authority he takes a great deal of personal risk—he may be condemned and executed as a spy.

"If for any reason you think fit to give Colonel Jaquess a furlough, and any authority from me for that object is necessary, you hereby have it for any length of time you see fit."

Without any knowledge of the above letter from the Pres-

ident, Mr. Gilmore on the last of May, gave President Lincoln the foregoing letters from General Rosecrans and Colonel Jaquess, and during the long interview which followed Mr. Lincoln said:

"I fear we can come to no adjustment. I fear the war must go on till the North and South have both drunk of the cup to the very dregs, till both have worked out in pain and grief and bitter humiliation the sin of two hundred years. It has seemed to me that God so wills it; and the first gleam I have had of a hope to the contrary is in this letter of Jaquess. This thing, irregular as it is, may mean that the Higher Powers are about to take a hand in this business and bring about a settlement.

"I want peace. I want to stop this terrible waste of life and property, and I know Colonel Jaquess well, and I see that working in the way he proposes he may be able to bring influences to bear upon Davis that he cannot well resist, and thus pave the way for an honorable settlement. . . . He proposes here to speak to them in the name of the Lord; and he says he feels that God's hand is in it, and He has laid the duty upon him. Now, if he feels that he has that kind of authority, he cannot fail to affect the element on which he expects to operate. . . . Such talk in you or me might sound fanatical, but in Jaquess it is simply natural and sincere. And I am not at all sure that he is not right. God selects His own instruments and sometimes they are queer ones, for instance, He chose me to steer the ship through a great crisis. . . . He (Jaquess) can do no more than open the door for further negotiations, which would have to be conducted with me here in a regular way.

"Here is a man, cool, deliberate, God-fearing, of exceptional sagacity and worldly wisdom, who undertakes a project that strikes you and me as utterly chimerical; he attempts to bring about, single-handed and on his own hook, a peace between two great sections. Moreover, he gets it into his head that God has laid this work upon him, and he is willing to

stake his life upon that conviction. The impulse on him is overpowering, as it was upon Luther, when he said, 'God help me. I can do no otherwise.'

"Can you account for this except on his own supposition that God is in it. And if that be so, something will come out of it, perhaps not what Jaquess expects, but what will be of service to the right. So, though there is risk about it, I shall let him go."

### THE FIRST EMBASSY

And Colonel Jaquess went. Without having seen the President, without any commission or authority from the government, without a convoy or companion, but with unquestioning confidence in his divine call and commission, early in July, 1863, he courageously entered upon and prosecuted his remarkable mission.

That this mission might not have the appearance of a recognition of the Confederate Government, the President insisted that knowledge of the proposition should be limited to, and held in strict confidence by the only persons who had any information respecting it. Those persons were President Lincoln, Generals Rosecrans, Thomas and Garfield, Colonel Jaquess and Mr. Gilmore. Apart from these six persons no one at that time had any knowledge or intimation of the existence of this unique mission. Subsequent events required that two and possibly three army officers, whose co-operation was needed, be informed respecting this affair. But no one in any way connected with the administration, and, apart from the President, no inmate of the White House—not even the President's private secretaries—at that time had any knowledge of this Embassy of Peace.

Immediately upon Mr. Lincoln's decision to grant the Colonel leave of absence and permission to visit the South, Mr. Gilmore informed General Rosecrans of the President's decision. His letter was answered by Major Frank S. Bond, Senior aide to General Rosecrans, in a communication dated

June 4th, 1863, in which he said: "On receipt of your letter I sent for Colonel Jaquess and had a talk with him. He says he does not wish to start at once if the Army is to move."

The purpose, if possible, to conduct the embassy of peace had become all-dominant in the soul of Colonel Jaquess, but, like a true soldier, he realized that his first obligation at that time was to bear his part in the activities of the army with which he was connected. Hence, though he was yearning to enter upon his mission, he preferred to remain at his post if a battle was likely to occur. But there was no forward movement or engagement of the army, and Colonel Jaquess proceeded on his unique and strange mission. Starting from Murfreesboro he went directly to Baltimore, where General Robert C. Schenck was in command.

It was probably because it was Mr. Lincoln's purpose to keep the knowledge of this movement from all who had not been already consulted respecting it, that he permitted Colonel Jaquess to go forth upon this work without a pass and without any request that permission to proceed should be given by army commanders at points along his journey. How he could expect Colonel Jaquess to proceed on his mission without the permission of leading army officers, and how he should expect such army officers to grant permission to pass through the lines without his request is difficult to understand.

The President may have believed that Colonel Jaquess' sublime trust in God would enable him in some proper way to secure the permission which he must have and for which Mr. Lincoln was unwilling to make request. Or more probably, the President had confidential understanding with his army commanders by which he could make known to them his wishes without a direct written statement.

During the history of this movement there were several events which go far to justify the conviction that such an undeclared understanding existed between the President and commanders in the Army. At all events, on the 13th of July, 1863, General Schenck sent from Baltimore the following

telegram to President Lincoln: "Colonel James F. Jaquess, 73d Illinois Infantry, is here from the Army of the Cumberland. He desires me to send him to Fort Monroe. Shall I do so? He says you understand."

To this telegram the President, on the 14th of July, made the following reply: "Mr. Jaquess is a very worthy gentleman, but I can have nothing to do, directly or indirectly, with the matter he has in view."

After such a message from the President, how was it possible for Colonel Jaquess to proceed? To this question there is no known answer, but it is known that he did proceed upon his mission, and by such rightful and proper methods as secured him permission to continue on his mission until he entered the Confederate lines. In the whole of human history there are few events which, in thrilling, dramatic interest, compare with the one we are now considering. An ordinary imagination can picture the fascinating scene which it presents. In the bright sunlight of a southern July we see this frontier minister of the gospel, erect in form and clad in the uniform of an army officer, proceeding alone in the direction of the Confederate capital. He is going forth into a hostile country with no authority save that of the Almighty, to demand of the proud and haughty leaders of the rebellion a cessation of the warfare they were conducting against the Government, and their full submission to that Government's authority. This demand he proposes to make, not in the name of the Federal Government, but in the name of the Almighty. Who else of all the heroes of ancient or modern history ever proceeded on a similar errand, without authority and without human companionship? And this scene appears the more marvelous when it is remembered that those for whom Colonel Jaquess proposes to make this demand were just at that time in the very depths of darkness and despondency. Everywhere in all the field of military conflict results seemed at that time most unfavorable to the Union cause. Mr. Gilmore tells us that he never saw President Lincoln

seemingly so discouraged and depressed as during the interview at which he declared his purpose to permit Colonel Jaquess to proceed on his mission. And the picture of this scene takes on its high colors of dramatic interest when it is remembered that just at the time Colonel Jaquess was proceeding as rapidly as possible toward the Confederate capital the great Southern Army, under their able commander—General Robert E. Lee—was moving northward, flushed with their recent victories and unquestioningly confident of immediate and ultimate success. Has pen of poet or historian ever given to the world a story more unique and fascinating?

It was in consonance with the wonderful presence-power of Colonel Jaquess that though clad in his military uniform, he was everywhere received with kindness by the officers and soldiers of the Confederate Army. His strong personality, his evident sincerity, his sublime faith and favor of God, gave him safe conduct at every point. General Longstreet, a distinguished Confederate commander, went forth to meet and welcome this volunteer ambassador of God. Respecting his experiences on this mission, Colonel Jaquess says: "I entered upon my mission, passed into the Confederate lines, met a most cordial reception, was received by those to whom my mission was directed as a visitant from the other world, and was strongly urged not to cease my efforts till the end was accomplished."

#### END OF FIRST EMBASSY

Learning that he could not proceed further on his mission without additional authority, Colonel Jaquess, after a brief sojourn in the South, returned to Baltimore, and from that city sent a letter to President Lincoln stating that he had valuable information to impart, and requesting an interview for that purpose.

The letter in which Colonel Jaquess made this request was never received by President Lincoln. His secretary, to whom at that time was entrusted the opening and sorting of

his mail, having no knowledge of this movement, naturally regarded this letter as one of the numberless messages then being received by the President, from the consideration of which he was properly relieved.

For two weeks Colonel Jaquess waited anxiously and in vain at Baltimore for word from President Lincoln, and learning that a battle was likely to be fought by the army with which he was connected, he hastened to the front and joined his regiment just in time to participate in the bloody battle of Chattanooga. In this battle two hundred of the men under his command, including nineteen commissioned officers, were killed or wounded, and two horses were shot under him as he was leading his regiment in the battle.

#### REQUEST RENEWED

At length there was a lull in military movements, and on the 4th of November, 1863, Colonel Jaquess addressed a letter to Mr. Gilmore, giving an account of his proceedings and expressing a desire to re-enter upon his embassy of peace. Up to this time no word had been received by the President or Mr. Gilmore respecting Colonel Jaquess and his movements after his departure from Baltimore in the middle of July, 1863. When President Lincoln consented to Colonel Jaquess' entrance upon the work, he said to Mr. Gilmore: "I shall be anxious to hear of him and I wish you would send me the first word you get." But Mr. Gilmore, though frequently seeing the President during those months, had no information to give in answer to inquiries concerning the Colonel.

Mr. Gilmore, in response to Colonel Jaquess' letter of November 4th, 1863, making request for an opportunity to renew the prosecution of his mission of peace, mentioned the matter to President Lincoln, and at length, through General James A. Garfield, who knew of this mission from its beginning in May, 1863, and a member of Congress at the time this second request of Colonel Jaquess was made, secured

permission to bring Colonel Jaquess to the White House for an interview with the President. But such were the movements of the army, and the interference of other matters, that the Colonel was unable to visit Washington until early in July, 1864, thirteen months after he started on his first embassy to the South.

#### THE SECOND EMBASSY

From the beginning of this movement, as I already have shown, Mr. Lincoln and all who were connected with it were in great uncertainty respecting what it might accomplish. General Rosecrans, on the 21st day of May, 1863, when recommending the proposition to Mr. Lincoln's approval, stated that he did not anticipate the results which Colonel Jaquess expected, but believed that it would result in great good. President Lincoln repeatedly expressed a like conviction concerning the achievements of the mission. And even Colonel Jaquess, in his first letter to the President stated that it might not accomplish precisely what he hoped, though it would do much good. But he never deviated from his purpose to make demand that there should be an immediate cessation of hostilities, trusting wholly in God for the final issue of the matter.

President Lincoln, at the time of his interview with Mr. Gilmore, early in April, 1864, having become convinced that the embassy would be unsuccessful in securing the results at which it aimed, had decided to give it no further countenance or encouragement. But Mr. Gilmore, who was thoroughly informed respecting conditions throughout the country and had become deeply interested in the mission, had come to see in it the possibility of other most desirable results. These he brought to the attention of the President, by reminding him of the danger of his defeat as a candidate for re-election, because of the conviction that was rapidly gaining strength that the Confederate leaders were willing to accept peace upon the single basis of the restoration of the Union.

Mr. Gilmore expressed to President Lincoln the conviction that Colonel Jaquess, by visiting Jefferson Davis at Richmond, and in the name of God demanding of him submission to the authority of the national Government, could secure from the Confederate chieftain, even if he declined his overtures for peace, a declaration that upon no condition save the independence of the South would any terms of peace be accepted. Such a declaration from Mr. Davis would silence the clamors for peace by convincing the loyal people that it could be secured only by the re-election of President Lincoln and the vigorous and successful prosecution of the war.

Mr. Lincoln was a far-seeing politician and instantly recognized the wisdom of Mr. Gilmore's suggestion and the possibility by this mission of securing from Mr. Davis the desired declaration. Therefore, at the conclusion of Mr. Gilmore's explanation, Mr. Lincoln said: "There is something in what you say. But Jaquess could not do it—he could not draw Davis' fire. He is too honest. You are the man for that business."

To this statement by the President, Mr. Gilmore replied: "Colonel Jaquess' honesty and sincerity exactly fit him for the business. Davis is astute and wary, but the Colonel's transparent honesty would disarm him completely."

"Have you suggested this to Jaquess?" said the President.

"No," replied Mr. Gilmore.

"Well, if you propose it to him he will tell you he won't have anything to do with the business. He feels that he is acting as God's servant and messenger, and he would recoil from anything like political finesse. But if Davis should make the declaration that no peace would be accepted without Southern independence the country should know it, and I can see that coming from him now, when everybody is tired of the war, and so many think some honorable settlement can be made, it might be of vital importance to us. But I tell you that not Jaquess but you are the man for that business."

This latter statement was a shock of surprise to Mr. Gilmore. Evidently there had not dawned upon his mind a thought of the possibility of his being asked by the President to undertake this mission.

His remonstrances, however, were all in vain. The President had become deeply interested in the proposition and was insistent that it should be conducted not by Jaquess but by Mr. Gilmore.

"This," said Mr. Gilmore, "is a new and unexpected thought to me, Mr. Lincoln. Will you allow me to consider it and talk it over with Mr. Chase and General Garfield?"

"Certainly," the President answered, "talk with them and bring them both here with you this evening. I should like to confer with them myself—with Chase particularly. Tell him so."

That evening Mr. Gilmore visited the President, accompanied by Mr. Chase, who had only a few days before retired from the President's Cabinet. General Garfield was not present because of his absence from the city. When Mr. Lincoln learned that General Garfield could not be present he said to Mr. Chase: "Well, I wanted you particularly. This is a delicate and important business and I did not want to start it without your advice."

"I know you are sincere in that expression, Mr. Lincoln," said Mr. Chase, "and I feel honored by it."

"Well, sit down, both of you," said Mr. Lincoln, "and let us get to business. Now, Mr. Gilmore, you have decided to ask me for a pass into the rebel lines?"

"I have, sir," answered Mr. Gilmore, "on the condition that you allow me to make such overtures to Davis as will put him entirely in the wrong if he should reject them."

"Well," said Mr. Lincoln, "Mr. Chase and I will talk about that in a moment. But, first, another question: Do you understand that I neither suggest, nor request, nor direct you to take this journey?"

"I do," promptly replied Mr. Gilmore.

"And will you say so," asked the President, "if it should seem to me to be necessary?"

"I will, whether you ask it of me or not," was the prompt response.

"And," said Mr. Lincoln, "if those people should hold on to you,—should give you free lodgings till our election is over, or in any other manner treat you unlike gentlemen,—do you understand that I shall be absolutely powerless to help you?"

"I understand that, sir, fully," said Mr. Gilmore.

"And you are willing to go?"

In answer to this question Mr. Gilmore expressed his willingness, with that understanding, to undertake the mission.

For two hours and more President Lincoln and Mr. Chase conferred together respecting the terms of peace which Gilmore and Jaquess would be authorized to state to the Confederate leaders as those which President Lincoln and the Government would probably be willing to accept.

The terms as dictated to Mr. Gilmore by Mr. Lincoln, and approved by Mr. Chase, were as follows:

First. The immediate dissolution of the Southern Government, and the disbandment of its armies; and the acknowledgment by all the States in rebellion of the supremacy of the Union.

Second. The total and absolute abolition of slavery in every one of the late Slave States and throughout the Union. This to be perpetual.

Third. Full amnesty to all who have been in any way engaged in the rebellion, and their restoration to all the rights of citizenship.

Fourth. All acts of secession to be regarded as nullities; and the late rebellious states to be, and be regarded, as if they had never attempted to secede from the Union. Representation in the House from the recent Slave States to be on the basis of their voting population.

Fifth. The sum of five hundred millions, in United States

stock, to be issued and divided between the late Slave States, to be used by them in payment to slave owners, loyal and disloyal, for the slaves emancipated by my proclamation. This sum to be divided among the late slave owners, equally and equitably, at the rate of one-half the value of the slaves in the year 1860; and if any surplus remain, it to be returned to the United States Treasury.

Sixth. A national convention to be convened as soon as practicable, to ratify this settlement, and make such changes in the Constitution as may be in accord with the new order of things.

Seventh. The intent and meaning of all the foregoing is that the Union shall be wholly restored as it was before the Rebellion, with the exception that all slaves within its borders are, and shall forever be, freemen.

After the terms upon which they finally agreed had been written out in full, Mr. Chase said: "Mr. Davis is not likely to accept the offer. Mr. Gilmore is confident that he will not accept peace without separation. To get his declaration to that effect is why you send Gilmore?"

To this the President replied: "True, but peace may possibly come out of this and I do not want to say a word that is not in good faith. We want to draw Davis' fire, but we must do it fairly.

"What I think of most is the risk Gilmore will run. The case is not the same with him as with Jaquess. There is something about that man, a kind of 'thus saith the Lord,' that would protect him anywhere. But Gilmore is not Jaquess. He will go in with my pass, and the rebels won't talk with him five minutes before they ascertain that he is fully possessed of my views. He will say he does not represent me; but they will think they know better. Now, as the thing they want most is our recognition of them, may they not hold on to him, to force me to some step for his protection that shall recognize them? And if they decline the overtures, as they probably will, is it not likely they will refuse to let him out

before our election, because of the damage he may do their friends by publishing the facts to the country? Now, Mr. Chase, can you see any way by which I can protect him?"

"I cannot," replied Mr. Chase, "unless you should copy the proposals into a letter addressed to Mr. Gilmore, sign it, and in it request him to read it to Mr. Davis. That would give him a semi-official character, and they would not dare to molest him."

"That I can't do," said Mr. Lincoln. "It would be making direct overtures. I don't see, Gilmore, but you will have to trust in the Lord; only be sure to keep your powder dry."

Mr. Gilmore then informed the President that Colonel Jaquess had agreed to accompany him, and said: "I should hesitate to go without him, as I should need the help of his cool courage to give me the backbone requisite for the occasion."

The President then gave Mr. Gilmore the following pass:

"Will General Grant allow James R. Gilmore and friend to pass our lines with ordinary baggage and go South.

"A. LINCOLN.

"July 6th, 1864."

As he handed Mr. Gilmore this necessary pass the President said: "Tell Colonel Jaquess that I omitted his name on account of the talk about his previous trip, and I wish you would explain to him my refusal to see him. I want him to feel kindly to me." No one can read these remarkable words of Mr. Lincoln without realizing that the great President cherished for this peculiar and remarkable soldier not only very high esteem but tender and loving regard.

When this prolonged interview between President Lincoln, Mr. Chase and Mr. Gilmore had accomplished its purpose, and his two guests arose to depart, Mr. Lincoln cordially said: "Good night, Mr. Chase," and then taking Mr. Gilmore lovingly by the hand he said: "God bless and prosper you. My good wishes will be with you. Good-bye." And then, still

holding Mr. Gilmore by the hand and with seeming great depth of feeling, he added: "Have you looked squarely in the face that if you get into trouble I can in no way help you. That I shall be obliged to say that while I have given you the terms on which I am personally willing to settle this thing, I have not authorized you to offer these or any terms whatever?"

To this Mr. Gilmore replied: "I think the object, sir, is worth the risk. I shall tell Davis distinctly that I have no authority and only desire to open the door for official negotiations."

It should be borne in mind that Colonel Jaquess was not present at this interview and knew nothing of the political features which the movement had taken on. His mind was wholly occupied with his divine call and commission from which he never for a moment allowed his attention to be diverted.

It was on the evening of the 6th of July, 1864, that James R. Gilmore, walking beside the magnificent form of Salmon P. Chase, emerged from the presence of Abraham Lincoln and from the White House to go forth on the following day with Colonel Jaquess "into the jaws of death" to endeavor to aid in rescuing the nation from the greatest peril in all its history.

#### THE PEACE PERIL

That peril arose from the fact that when those volunteer envoys started on their mission in July, 1864, conditions throughout the country were very different from those which existed in May, 1863, when this mission was first suggested by Colonel Jaquess. There had been a year and a half of experience under the Emancipation Proclamation; the Constitutional Amendment abolishing slavery had passed the senate by a very large majority, and though defeated in the House, arrangements had been made for a reconsideration of the vote, and there were strong indications that at the next

session that amendment would pass the House, and would beyond all question be approved by the requisite three-fourths of the States.

In addition to these advance movements in civil affairs, more than one hundred and fifty thousand colored soldiers had enlisted in the Federal army and were doing excellent military service. The great and important victories at Gettysburg, and Vicksburg and vicinity, had been won; Lee, with his great army, had been driven back into the South; Grant had been put in command of all the Union forces and was steadily advancing toward the Confederate capital; Sherman was prosecuting his memorable march toward the sea; Sheridan was leading his army forward with uninterrupted success, and an early cessation of hostilities seemed likely soon to be accomplished by military force.

But, notwithstanding these auspicious conditions in the field, an appalling peril threatened the life of the nation from the danger of the defeat in November of President Lincoln, who was a candidate for re-election. So unpromising at this time was the military outlook for the Confederates that their only hope of avoiding early and overwhelming defeat depended on the movement then being prosecuted with all possible vigor for the election of an opposition President who, for the sake of peace, would consent to national dismemberment.

When General Neal Dow was released from Libby Prison, in which he had spent eight months as a prisoner, and was exchanged for General Fitzhugh Lee, on the journey to his home in Maine he visited Washington and was accorded a magnificent ovation in the national House of Representatives. This was fittingly followed by personal greetings of members of the House which was worthy of the veteran military leader and the champion of civic righteousness.

Respecting what occurred upon that occasion, General Dow said: "At that time a strong effort was made in influential quarters to substitute some other candidate than Mr.

Lincoln for the ensuing Presidential election. The members of the House crowded about me to know what effect such a measure would have at the South. Great was the joy of those surrounding me when I said: 'The rebels are now exhausted of money and men and hope; their only chance is that Mr. Lincoln may be set aside, as they would regard that as a repudiation of his policy, and are sure that peace to the Confederacy, with formal dissolution of the Union, would follow.'"<sup>4</sup>

The Confederate leaders were not only deeply interested in the movement for the defeat of President Lincoln, but were endeavoring to accomplish that result by keeping a strong commission of the ablest politicians of the South constantly at Niagara Falls to confer and co-operate with their allies in the North respecting this matter. Those commissioners were for months in frequent and prolonged consultation with leaders of the opposition movement to secure such action of the Chicago Democratic Convention as would accomplish the result for which they were striving.

In his "Southern History of the War," E. A. Pollard, an ardent Confederate, says: "No doubt can rest in history, that at the time of the Chicago Convention (which named McClellan) the democratic party in the North had prepared a secret program of operations, the final and inevitable conclusion of which was the acknowledgment of the Confederate states."

In commenting on this declaration of Mr. Pollard, Horace Greeley said: "We have always supposed that there was a general understanding arrived at between the rebel commissioners in Canada and their democratic visitors from this side as to what should be said and done at Chicago."

Relative to that Confederate Commission at Niagara Falls, and its purpose, President Lincoln, on July 25th, 1864, in a letter to Abram Wakeman, postmaster of New York City, said:

<sup>4</sup> Abraham Lincoln, *Tributes from his Associates*, p. 93.

"The men of the South recently (and perhaps still) at Niagara Falls tell us distinctly that they are in the confidential employment of the Rebellion; and they tell us as distinctly that they are not empowered to offer terms of peace. Does any one doubt that what they are empowered to do is to assist in selecting and arranging a candidate and a platform for the Chicago convention? . . . Thus the present Presidential contest will almost certainly be no other than a contest between a union and a disunion candidate, disunion certainly following the success of the latter. The issue is a mighty one for all people and all times, and whoever aids the right will be appreciated and remembered."<sup>5</sup>

During all the summer of 1864 those Confederate commissioners remained at Niagara Falls. They were thus in close touch with their friends, the leaders of the peace party in the loyal states, and their presence at the Falls afforded those leaders seeming justification for the claim that they were there for the purpose of endeavoring to secure peace by negotiation. This utterly untruthful claim was urged by those peace leaders with very great vigor and enthusiasm, and was given a marvelous degree of credence by a constantly increasing number of loyal people in the North.

The Confederate leaders never had uttered a word that would justify these claims and many times had declared that they would never consider any terms of peace without disunion and Southern independence. But during this Presidential campaign they had cunningly remained silent respecting this matter, in order to afford their friends in the North seeming justification for the claim that they had been sobered by reverses in the field, and were ready to negotiate for peace with "The Constitution as it is and the Union as it was."

#### THE INTERVIEW WITH JEFFERSON DAVIS

Just at this crisis, when the false claims of the opposition were being given such wide credence, and when to those of

<sup>5</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., pp. 170-171.

us who were active in the work of national preservation, it seemed that the nation was rapidly drifting upon the nearby rocks of national dismemberment, on the 7th of July, 1864, the volunteer ambassadors of peace—Jaquess and Gilmore—went forth from Washington, D. C., the one in the name of God, to demand of Jefferson Davis and his associates submission to the authority of the national government; and the other, in case this demand was rejected, to bring back and proclaim throughout the nation declarations which that Confederate leader should make, and which were expected to give the lie to the claims being made respecting the possibility of a peaceable restoration of the Union. Such a declaration, if secured and widely published, would stop the mouths of those who were declaring the war a failure, and demanding a dishonorable and destructive peace.

On July 9th, the second day after their departure from Washington, Mr. Gilmore and Colonel Jaquess arrived at City Point, and were cordially received by General Grant, who expressed great delight at meeting Colonel Jaquess, with whom he was well acquainted and of whom he had a very high opinion. When informed that they desired to visit Richmond, General Grant was doubtful of his ability to secure for them the permission of the Confederate authorities to do so.

But after several days, during which they were guests of General Butler, the permission was received, when an unexpected and seemingly insurmountable obstacle was encountered in the peremptory refusal of General Grant to permit them to proceed unless he was informed respecting the purposes for which they wished to visit Richmond. Mr. Lincoln's written pass given to Mr. Gilmore did not avail to cause General Grant to relent; but after he had wired the President, at Mr. Gilmore's suggestion, and had received his answer, he not only opened the way for them to proceed on their journey, but gave them an imposing escort to the Confederate lines. General Grant's sudden change of mind and his arrangements

for the continuance of the journey of these envoys was another illustration of President Lincoln's purpose to see that these two self-appointed ambassadors should have the opportunity to prosecute their mission unhindered by any obstacle within the Union lines. What he said that night in his telegraphic reply to General Grant is not known, but we are assured that his message was so worded as to cause his hand to be unseen in opening to them the doors which General Grant's military prudence had closed, and in causing them to be provided by General Grant with such a distinguished escort as made upon the Confederate officers a profound and favorable impression.

When Mr. Gilmore and Colonel Jaquess finally reached the Confederate capital they were placed under strict surveillance, which continued by day and night until their departure for the North. They were, however, treated with marked courtesy and were granted the desired interview with Jefferson Davis and the Hon. Judah P. Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of State.

At the preliminary interview with Mr. Benjamin, Colonel Jaquess said: "We bring no overtures and have no authority from our Government. We stated that in our note. We would be glad, however, to know what terms would be acceptable to Mr. Davis. If they at all harmonize with Mr. Lincoln's views we will report them to him, and so open the door for official negotiations."

When asked, "Did Mr. Lincoln in any way authorize you to come here?" Colonel Jaquess replied: "No, sir. We come with his pass, but not by his request. We say distinctly we have no official or unofficial authority. We come as men and Christians, not as diplomats, hoping, in a frank talk with Mr. Davis to discover some way by which this war may be stopped."

With this frank and unequivocal statement made by Colonel Jaquess to Mr. Benjamin, the requested interview with Mr. Davis was secured, and the terms of peace agreed upon

by President Lincoln and Mr. Chase were submitted. And it was stated that while they had no authority to submit any terms, there was reason for the belief that the terms stated would be acceptable to Mr. Lincoln and the government.

At the beginning of the interview Colonel Jaquess said to Mr. Davis: "We have asked this interview in the hope that you may suggest some way by which this war may be stopped. Our people want peace, your people do, and your Congress has recently said that you do. We have come to ask how it can be brought about."

To this statement Mr. Davis with characteristic assurance replied: "In a very simple way. Withdraw your armies from our territory and peace will come of itself. . . . Let us alone, and peace will come at once."

"But," replied the Colonel, "we cannot let you alone so long as you repudiate the Union; that is the one thing the Northern people will not surrender."

"I know," said Mr. Davis. "You would deny to us what you exact for yourselves—the right of self-government. . . . You have shown such bitterness toward the South, you have put such an ocean of blood between the two countries that I despair of seeing any harmony in my time. Our children may forget this war, but we cannot."

To this emphatic statement by Mr. Davis, Colonel Jaquess calmly and with dignity replied: "I think the bitterness you speak of, sir, does not really exist. We meet and talk here as friends; our soldiers meet and fraternize with each other, and I feel sure that if the Union were restored a more friendly feeling will arise between us than ever has existed. The war has made us know and respect each other better than before. This is the view of very many Southern men. I have had it from very many of them—your leading citizens."

To this loving and persuasive statement by Colonel Jaquess Mr. Davis icily replied: "They are mistaken. They do not understand Southern sentiment. How can we feel anything but bitterness toward men who deny us our rights? If you

enter my house and drive me out of it, am I not your natural enemy?"

With that marvelous courage and trust in God which kept him always calm and serene, Colonel Jaquess, in reply to this contentious declaration of Mr. Davis, said: "You put the case too strongly, but we cannot fight forever; the war must end at some time; we must finally agree upon something; can we not agree now and stop this frightful carnage?"

This brief and manly statement by the Colonel seemed only to irritate the Confederate leader, who with more show of feeling said: "The North was mad and blind; it would not let us govern ourselves and so the war came, and now it must go on till the last man of this generation falls in his tracks, and his children seize his musket and fight our battle, unless you acknowledge our right to self-government. We are not fighting for slavery. We are fighting for independence and that, or extermination, we will have." To this Colonel Jaquess with tenderness replied: "When I have seen your young men dying on the battlefield, and your old men, women and children starving in their homes, I have felt that I could risk my life to save them."

To this Mr. Davis answered: "I know your motives, Colonel Jaquess, and I honor you for them." Later in the conversation Mr. Davis said: "At your door lies all the misery and crime of this war, and it is a fearful, fearful account."

At this point the spirit of Elijah radiated from the countenance of the Colonel, who replied: "Not all of it, Mr. Davis; I admit a fearful account, but it is not all at our door. The passions of both sides are aroused. Unarmed men are hanged, persons are shot down in cold blood by yourselves. Elements of barbarism are entering the war from both sides that should make us—you and me—as Christian men shudder to think of. In God's name let us stop it! Let us do something, concede something, to bring about peace. You cannot expect, with **only** four and a half millions, as Mr. Benjamin says you have, to hold out forever against twenty millions."

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The reader should not overlook, nor fail to appreciate the significance of the smile which appeared on Mr. Davis' face as he disclosed the close relationship existing between the Confederates and their northern allies, when he asked: "Do you suppose there are twenty millions at the North determined to crush us? I do not so read the returns of your recent elections. To my mind they show that fully one-half of your people think we are right and would fight for us if they had the opportunity."

Mr. Davis further said: "Slavery is not an element in the contest."

"Then," it was replied, "if I understand you, the dispute with your government is now narrowed down to this, union or disunion?"

"Yes," said Mr. Davis, "or, to put it in other words, independence or subjugation." Later he said: "We will govern ourselves! We will do it, if we have to see every Southern plantation sacked and every Southern city in flames."

When the interview closed Mr. Davis kindly said "Good-bye," and shook hands with Mr. Gilmore, expressing the hope of seeing him again in Richmond in happier times; but, as Mr. Gilmore tells us, "with the Colonel his parting was particularly cordial. Taking his hand in both of his he said: 'Colonel, I respect your character and your motives, and I wish you well—I wish you every good I can wish you consistently with the interests of the Confederacy.'"

It will be observed that Mr. Davis, during this interview, made precisely the declaration which was expected, the declaration that nothing but Southern independence would be for a moment considered. This declaration was in accordance with what Mr. Lincoln and those associated with him fully believed was the purpose of the Confederate chieftain. And it was to afford him the opportunity to consider liberal terms of peace and to secure from him this declaration in case of his refusal to consider those terms, that Mr. Gilmore undertook and prosecuted this second mission. For the same reason

Mr. Lincoln favored the mission and provided that it should be carried out.

Colonel Jaquess, however, aimed at nothing less than securing immediate peace in the name of the Almighty. While regarding it as his only mission to demand a cessation of hostility in the name and by the authority of Jehovah, he was not confident of securing acceptance of the terms offered. He was, however, from first to last unquestioningly confident that God was in the undertaking, and whether its immediate results were or were not such as he sought to accomplish, he firmly believed that in the end it would lead to desirable results.

It could not be expected that the purposes and aims of Gilmore and Jaquess would not be discovered by men as able and astute as Davis and Benjamin. The latter, after the departure of their two visitors, freely expressed his conviction to Davis that Gilmore and Jaquess should be kept in Richmond until after the Presidential election. He saw in Jaquess only transparent honesty and sincerity. He believed he was seriously seeking peace, but he was fully convinced that the frank statements of Davis would by Gilmore be widely distributed throughout the North, and would contribute very largely to the re-election of President Lincoln. But Mr. Davis, while sharing in the apprehensions of Benjamin, realized that to hold these peaceable citizens, who came to them in the name of God, asking only for peace and the restoration of the Union, would injure the Confederate cause in the North and in the South to a far greater extent than would their return to the Union lines. While these matters were being discussed by Davis and Benjamin, Mr. Gilmore and Colonel Jaquess arranged for their departure North early the following morning. But when the promised escort to the Union lines did not appear at the appointed time, Mr. Gilmore became nervously apprehensive that the delay boded ill for him and his companion. But no such thought seemed to enter the mind of Colonel Jaquess, respecting whose behavior Mr.

Gilmore says: "All this while he sat, his spectacles on his nose, and his chair canted against the window sill, absorbed in reading the newspaper. Occasionally he would look up to comment on something he was reading, but not a movement of his face nor a glance of his eye, had betrayed that he was conscious of Judge Ould's delay, or of my extreme restlessness. As I said, 'Ould (their escort) is more than three hours late, what does it mean?' he took off his spectacles and quietly rubbing the glasses with his handkerchief, replied: 'It looks badly, but—I ask no odds of them. We have tried to serve the country, that is enough. Let them hang us if they like. But if they do, if they ill-treat two men who come to them with the olive branch of peace, their rotten Confederacy won't hang together for a fortnight. The civilized world will pray for its destruction.'"

At length, being shown through Libby prison, these two volunteer ambassadors were escorted to the Union lines, where Colonel Jaquess, by invitation, remained for several days a guest of General Grant. But Gilmore, without delay, returned to Washington, and arriving there at night, proceeded at once to the White House to report to President Lincoln. Fortunately, he found the President in consultation with Charles Sumner, the great Massachusetts senator, who then for the first time learned of this embassy of peace. Mr. Gilmore had carefully prepared a report, which he read to the President in the presence of Mr. Sumner, and it was immediately decided to publish a brief summary of the interview with Davis, including his declarations relative to the terms of peace.

This, at Mr. Sumner's suggestion, was first to appear in the Boston *Evening Transcript*, and to be followed by a more extended account in the *Atlantic Monthly*. As Mr. Gilmore was about to withdraw from the conference at the White House, Mr. Lincoln, with great elation, said: "Jaquess was right. God was in it. This may be worth more to us than half a dozen battles. It is important that Davis' position should be known at once. Get the thing out as soon as you

can, but don't forget to send me the proof of what you write for the *Atlantic Monthly*. Good-bye, God bless you."

#### PERIL MORE APPALLING

The perils which threatened the nation at the time Jaquess and Gilmore started on the second embassy early in July, 1864, were greatly increased during the weeks of their absence in the South, by the false claims of the peace agitators who were opposing President Lincoln's re-election. And after the return of those volunteer envoys with the defiant declarations of Mr. Davis, and their publication, the helpful influence of those disclosures among the masses of the people was not at first recognized by the leaders of the Union party.

As the time approached for holding the Presidential election, Mr. Lincoln's realization of the nation's perils became more and more oppressive. Under a solemn sense of duty he remained continuously at his post, and when on the 15th of August, 1864, he was requested by John T. Mills to ward off a breakdown in his health by taking a few weeks' vacation, he deliberately and with great solemnity replied:

"I cannot fly from my thoughts—my solicitude for this great country follows me wherever I go. I do not think it is personal vanity or ambition, though I am not free from these infirmities, but I cannot but feel that the weal or woe of this great nation will be decided in November. There is no program offered by any wing of the democratic party but that must result in the permanent destruction of the Union."

When reminded by Mr. Mills that General McClellan would undoubtedly be the democratic candidate for President and that he was "in favor of crushing out this rebellion by force," Mr. Lincoln made the following reply, which should never be forgotten by the American people: "Sir, the slightest knowledge of arithmetic will prove to any man that the rebel armies cannot be destroyed by democratic strategy. It would sacrifice all the white men of the North to do it. There are

now in the service of the United States nearly one hundred and fifty thousand able-bodied colored men, most of them under arms, defending and acquiring Union territory. The democratic strategy demands that these forces be disbanded, and that the masters be conciliated by restoring them to slavery. The black men who are now assisting Union prisoners to escape are to be converted into our enemies, in the vain hope of gaining the good will of their masters. We shall have to fight two nations instead of one.

"You cannot conciliate the South if you guarantee to them ultimate success; and the experience of the present war proves their success is inevitable if you fling the compulsory labor of millions of black men into their side of the scale. Will you give our enemies such military advantages as insure success, and then depend on coaxing, flattery and concession to get them back into the Union? Abandon all the posts now garrisoned by black men, take one hundred and fifty thousand men from our side and put them in the battlefield or cornfield against us, and we will be compelled to abandon the war in three weeks."<sup>6</sup>

The entire influence of the Confederacy was back of the Niagara Falls Commission, the purpose of which was to secure at the Chicago convention the nomination of a candidate for President, and the adoption of a platform favorable to Southern independence. That commission succeeded in securing the latter of these two results in the adoption of the resolution written by Vallandigham, which was wholly to their liking. Mr. Vallandigham had been, and was the leader of the extreme Confederate-favoring element of the North. So offensive had his utterances and conduct become that he was exiled from the country, but after a time returned and was permitted to remain. In the Chicago convention he was the recognized champion of the Confederate-favoring element. The Niagara Falls Commission, however, did not secure the nomination of the candidate of their choice; but they were fully aware that

<sup>6</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 189.

if Mr. Lincoln could be defeated no President thus elected could possibly refrain from carrying out the program of peace, even though it required national dismemberment.

To judge correctly the purposes of a political party we must not look to the platform or the declarations of its candidates, but to the obvious animating sentiments of the people composing that party. The animating sentiments of the opposition party in attendance at the Chicago convention of 1864 was indicated by the tumultuous and prolonged applause which greeted the introduction and the adoption of the Vallandigham resolution which declared the war a failure and demanded a cessation of hostilities.

In justice to General McClellan, who was the nominee of the Chicago convention, it should be stated that in his letter of acceptance he emphatically avowed his loyalty to the Union and his determination never to consent to its dissolution.

But in his criticism of McClellan's quasi repudiation of the platform on which he was a candidate for election, Vallandigham declared that in the Chicago convention the sentiments expressed by General McClellan had little or no support, and that the resolution written by him and adopted by the convention, expressed not only the convictions and purposes of that convention, but those of the adherents of the party throughout the nation. In this statement Mr. Vallandigham was undoubtedly correct. It was my privilege to be an active participant in the political movements in the nation at that time. I was almost constantly upon the stump addressing great outdoor political rallies, and smaller but equally enthusiastic meetings in halls, churches, and schoolhouses, and I was untiring in my attendance upon party conferences, caucuses and conventions. Therefore, I was thoroughly familiar with existing conditions and with all influences which at that time, by open and fair methods, or by cunning and stealth, were engaged in the activities of the political arena; and although military conditions, operations and prospects at that time were so favorable as to justify the hope for an early and satis-

factory termination of the war, to those of us who, in the political field, were struggling for the re-election of President Lincoln as the only method of securing the preservation of the Union, it was the darkest period of all those stormy years; for no possible military triumphs could avail to save the Union without a favorable verdict of the people at the polls in November. During that campaign the following circular was widely and plentifully distributed throughout Ohio:

### A PRAYER FOR PEACE

#### ON THE BASIS OF THE INTEGRITY OF THE UNION

To the President of the United States:

We, the women of Ohio, the mothers, wives, daughters and sisters of the soldiers in the field, or who slumber in patriotic graves, petition to the President to grant us peace.

We love the union of the states, but above all we love that sacred and holy union composed of our fathers, husbands, sons and brothers. Many of our homes are desolate—all are obscured in gloom, and our habiliments of woe are stained with fraternal, with conjugal and with filial blood. Oh, then, let our prayer be heard, and do not doom to death the remaining loved ones whose presence saves us from despair! With prayers for our country and peace, we trustingly subscribe our names.<sup>7</sup>

Other circulars of a similar character were, in like manner, distributed in other states, and their influence was inestimably harmful to the Union cause. Such appeals, whether in circulars, newspapers or in public addresses, would have possessed but little if any force without the claim which was persistently presented that "peace could readily be secured without further effusion of blood," if the national Government would only consent to a restoration of the Union without any interference with the institution of slavery.

In its earlier stages the war was prosecuted by the national government for the sole purpose of preserving the Union, but it had come to be regarded as necessary to destroy slavery in order to save the Union. And the movement for the overthrow of slavery had made such progress that the government was irreversibly committed to the extermination of that institution. It was upon that well-understood platform that President Lincoln was a candidate for re-election.

There was no doubt as to the purpose of an overwhelming majority of the people in the loyal states never to consent to a dissolution of the Union, but there were many loyal people who were ready to give credence to the utterly false declaration of the opposition leaders that peace could be secured by negotiations without further bloodshed. This caused the peril of disunion to loom up as at no other period, and seriously to threaten the nation's life. A consideration of the conditions at that time in the loyal states will show how great and appalling that peril was.

At the time of President Lincoln's first election in 1860, the voting population of the North was quite evenly divided between those who supported and those who opposed him. A very large per cent of those who voted against him were intensely hostile to all antislavery sentiments and measures. They disliked the colored people and earnestly believed in slavery as an institution which kept that race in its proper place. All such were in hearty sympathy with the South before and during the rebellion. But a large per cent of those who opposed Mr. Lincoln's election in 1860 were loyal to the Union, and when the flag was assailed they instantly sprang to the defense of the Government. With them all party ties disappeared, and with all loyal supporters of the Government they united in forming what was known as the "Union Party." Leading democrats like Douglas, Logan and many others of great prominence and influence rallied to the support of the administration and were followed by the loyal people of every party. From this great multitude of Union

men, irrespective of party affiliations, the Union army was recruited, but those in the loyal states who in heart sympathized with the South refused to enlist and remained at home, as a part of the nation's electorate, and in the absence of the loyal voters who were in the army, they constituted a very dangerous element; yet being in the minority they were unable at elections to aid the Confederate movement to any very considerable extent.

Had the Presidential campaign of 1864 been conducted upon the single issue of union or disunion, the opposition would have had no show of success, but by claiming that the South was ripe for a restoration of the Union, without further war, this thoroughly disloyal element in the loyal states was enabled to win to the support of their efforts for the election of a peace-favoring candidate many loyal people whom they could induce to believe in their false claims respecting the possibility of peace by official negotiations. The work of winning loyal people to the support of this disloyal peace movement was prosecuted with such vigor and persistence that at midsummer, during the Presidential campaign, there appeared little hope of the re-election of President Lincoln.

During that campaign Hon. Henry J. Raymond, formerly Lieutenant-Governor of New York, subsequently a distinguished member of Congress and at that time and for many years the proprietor and very able and influential editor of the *New York Times*, was chairman of the national committee of the Union party which had nominated and was supporting President Lincoln for re-election. When that Presidential campaign was at its height Mr. Raymond addressed President Lincoln a lengthy and most discouraging letter, dated August 22nd, 1864, in which among other similar statements he said:

"The tide is setting strongly against us. Hon. E. B. Washburne writes that 'were an election to be held now in Illinois we should be beaten.' Mr. Cameron writes that Pennsylvania is against us. Governor Morton writes that nothing but the most strenuous efforts can carry Indiana. This state,

New York, according to the best information I can get, would go fifty thousand against us tomorrow. And so of the rest.

"In some way or other the suspicion is widely diffused that we can have peace with Union if we would. It is idle to reason with this belief—still more idle to denounce it. It can only be expelled by some authoritative act, at once bold enough to fix attention and distinct enough to defy incredulity and challenge respect.

"Why would it not be wise, under these circumstances, to appoint a commission, in due form, to make distinct proffers of peace to Davis, as the head of the rebel armies, on the sole condition of acknowledging the supremacy of the Constitution—all other questions to be settled in a convention of the people of all the states?

"I cannot conceive of any answer which Davis could give to such a proposition which would not strengthen you and the Union cause everywhere. Even your radical friends could not fail to applaud it when they should see the practical strength it would bring to the common cause.

"I beg you to excuse the earnestness with which I have pressed this matter upon your attention. It seems to me calculated to do good—and incapable of doing harm. It will turn the tide of public sentiment and avert impending evils of the gravest character. It will arouse and concentrate the loyalty of the country and unless I am greatly mistaken give us an easy and a fruitful victory. Permit me to add that if done at all I think this should be done at once—as your own spontaneous act. In advance of the Chicago convention it might render the action of that body of very little consequence."<sup>8</sup>

Bearing the same date as Mr. Raymond's letter the following was received by Hon. William H. Seward from Thurlow Weed of Albany, N. Y.:

"When, ten days since, I told Mr. Lincoln that his re-

<sup>8</sup> Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. IX., p. 219.

election was an impossibility, I also told him that the information would soon come to him through other channels. It has doubtless ere this reached him. At any rate nobody here doubts it, nor do I see anybody from other states who authorizes the slightest hope of success. Mr. Raymond, who has just left me, says that unless some prompt and bold step be now taken all is lost. The people are wild for peace. They are told that the President will only listen to terms of peace on condition (that) slavery be abandoned. . . . Mr. Raymond thinks commissioners should be immediately sent to Richmond offering to treat for peace on the basis of Union. That something should be done and promptly done to give the Administration a chance for its life is certain."<sup>9</sup>

If President Lincoln had pursued the course here suggested by Mr. Raymond and approved by Mr. Weed, he would in so doing have given to the Confederate government just the recognition the leaders of the Rebellion most ardently desired, and would have caused like recognition promptly to be given the Confederacy by European nations. Only a few days earlier, as stated on a preceding page of this chapter, Mr. Chase during the conference at the White House with Mr. Gilmore suggested to the President a course of action which Mr. Lincoln immediately saw would result, if taken, in the recognition which he always had refused to give the Confederate government. What marvelous sagacity was required to avoid the fatal blunders which such great men were then urging upon him!

On the day following the date of these two letters Mr. Lincoln carefully wrote a memorandum, which he sealed, giving instruction that it should not be opened until after the Presidential election. Before sealing the memorandum he secured upon the reverse side of the paper the signatures of the members of his Cabinet without their knowledge of its contents. That memorandum is as follows:<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Abraham Lincoln, *A History*, Vol. IX., p. 250.

<sup>10</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 203.

"Executive Mansion, August 23rd, 1864.

"This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to so co-operate with the President-elect as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration; as he will have to secure his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterward.

"A. LINCOLN."

Why Mr. Lincoln, with his own hand, and without any person's knowledge, should have written this memorandum never has been and never can be explained. But that memorandum constitutes a milestone on the way of governmental progress. For half a century and more it has touched the hearts of every truly loyal man and woman who has given it a sympathetic perusal. That at such a time his great heart, so true to God, and so faithful to every interest of humanity, should be pierced through and through with the pain that wrung from him that piteous wail of anguish, is cause for tears of tender sympathy.

That memorandum, and the two letters from Raymond and Weed, which were probably received by the President the day he wrote it, faithfully disclose the condition of the country at the time as understood by the loyal people of the nation.

#### THE PERIL AVERTED

In accordance with Mr. Sumner's suggestion, which was approved by the President, Mr. Gilmore prepared a brief news item containing an account of the interview with Mr. Davis and his declaration that the Confederates were not fighting for slavery but for independence, and that they would never consent to a restoration of the Union. This news item was first published in the Boston *Evening Transcript* of July 22nd, 1864, and was copied by the loyal newspapers throughout the nation. It at once arrested the attention of the nation, and

prepared the way for the more extended history of the Jaquess-Gilmore embassy, and a full account of the interview with Davis, which was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for September, 1864. The proofs of this magazine article were, at his request, furnished President Lincoln and carefully revised by him before its publication, and that article is now before me in the copy of the *Atlantic Monthly* in which it first appeared.

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, in a letter to Mr. Gilmore, which is in the library of the Johns Hopkins University, in Baltimore, states that "beyond question that article had a larger number of readers than any magazine article ever written." It was at once reproduced in its entirety by the London *Times*, *News*, and *Telegraph*, and was republished by the leading newspapers in all the loyal states, and was the theme of strong editorials, political speeches and private conversations among the people. It was more seriously considered and talked about than any other matter during the Presidential campaign.

Even the great victories of Sherman and Sheridan did not arouse and hold public attention as did the declarations of Davis which appeared in that magazine article. Those declarations of the Confederate leader cleared the political atmosphere by showing that there was not the slightest foundation in truth for the claim of the opposition peace party that the South would welcome peace upon the terms of the restoration of the Union.

The peace movement had attained tremendous strength when those declarations of Davis were made public. It had extended throughout all the loyal states and was rapidly advancing to greater portions. It had become so powerful that, as before stated, the leaders of the Union party had lost all hope of President Lincoln's re-election, and the President himself on the 23rd day of August, 1864, with a sad heart, had written and sealed his now historical memorandum expressing the conviction that he would not be re-elected.

There was a measure of plausibility in the claim that the victories at Vicksburg and vicinity, and at Gettysburg, the constant advance of Grant upon Richmond, Sherman's triumphant march to the sea, and the series of Union victories under Sheridan, had caused the Confederate leaders to recognize the certainty of their early overthrow and to be willing to consider overtures for peace. Although we knew those claims were without warrant or justification, until the Davis disunion declarations were published, we could not prove them false to the satisfaction of those who were joining the peace movement in the hope that those claims were true. Many times before those declarations were published my pleas at public meetings for the re-election of President Lincoln were interrupted by those claims being thrust forward and insisted upon by opposition leaders. And like events were constantly occurring throughout the loyal states to the unavoidable advantage of the peace party.

I cannot forget the pathetic and appalling scenes which I witnessed during that Presidential campaign, previous to the publication of the Davis declarations that he would never consent to peace without disunion. It was heartrending to see staunch, loyal unionists joining the Confederate-favoring peace movement under the delusion that the war had accomplished the purposes for which it had been conducted, and that the Confederate leaders were ready and eager to return to their allegiance to the Government. The toll of the war had been so great; so many had fallen in battle or died of wounds, sickness and hardships; so unspeakable had been the sufferings and sacrifices throughout the loyal states that many true Union men were readily caught in the snare so skillfully constructed by the Confederate leaders and manipulated by their northern allies, and in large and increasing numbers were joining in a movement designed and calculated to accomplish the dismemberment of the nation.

It was utterly impossible to arrest and turn this movement back, or retard the desertion of sincere and devoted adherents

of the Union cause from the ranks of the supporters of President Lincoln, and their enlistment under the opposition banner. It was utterly beside the mark to appeal to the spirit of patriotism, inasmuch as they were sincerely loyal to their country, and were willing to make any needed sacrifices in its defense. Their mistake was they had been induced to believe that the further prosecution of the war was not necessary to the preservation of the nation.

Like a stampeding herd, those deserters were blindly rushing on their way, deaf to reason and remonstrance. While the brave soldiers in the field were winning glorious victories and rapidly marching on to early and complete triumph, many of their relatives and friends in the loyal states were joining in a movement which if successful would have meant the surrender of all the fruits of their years of sacrifice and suffering. During all the months of that memorable campaign I was in the midst of the contending movements, aiding in the struggle to stay the tide of desertion from the Union party, and to save the nation by the re-election of President Lincoln; and I cannot forget the determination with which people of unquestionable loyalty at that time aided in carrying out the program prepared by the Confederate leaders, under the mad delusion that those leaders were eager for peace and the restoration of the Union. I cannot forget—it lingers with me still like the memory of a frightful dream—the darkness which at that time hung like a storm-cloud over the nation and the cause of human freedom.

And I hope ever to remember that day, when like a great light from heaven the disclosures of the Jaquess-Gilmore embassy burst upon the world first in the brief news item in the Boston *Transcript* and afterwards in the Gilmore magazine article, revealing the appalling disaster toward which we were rapidly moving.

The scenes which followed that exposure of the fixed determination of the Confederate leaders to destroy the nation, and the utter untruthfulness of the claims of their emissaries

in the North, linger in the memory of those who witnessed them like the pleasing recollections of a loved one's recovery from a seemingly fatal illness. The column of loyal people moving toward the camp of the opposition suddenly halted and began to return to the Union camp, where the starry emblem of an undivided nation floated in undimmed splendor and glory. That return in its early stages was somewhat hesitating, for the peace delusion had taken fast hold upon its victims, and it required time and effort to dispel the enchantment of a hoped-for bloodless peace; but the light of truth had begun to shine and each day witnessed an increase in the public realization of the appalling disaster which for months we had been steadily approaching, and it became more and more evident that it could be avoided only by the re-election of President Lincoln; and as that conviction grew there was an increase in the number returning to the Union party, and in the haste and zest with which they resumed their allegiance to the President and his governmental policies. With glad and grateful heart I now recall the occasions when the Confederate-favoring peace delusion was thrust into meetings I was addressing and was speedily and easily proved to be false by a statement of Jefferson Davis' declarations to Jaquess and Gilmore. That gun never missed fire and no peace party champion at whom it was aimed ever failed to fall when it was discharged. Every speaker in the campaign for the re-election of President Lincoln, who was at all fit for that work, was familiar with the Gilmore article and made such effective use of the declarations of Davis as to cause the people to realize the unyielding determination of the Confederate leaders never to consent to peace which did not include Southern independence. And thus was broken the power of the false claims of the peace party and thus were the deserters from the Union party brought back to their allegiance to the Government in such numbers as to save the nation by the re-election of Abraham Lincoln.

Horace Greeley was probably better informed than was

any other man in the Union respecting political conditions and movements, and that great journalist stated in the *Tribune* that the scheme to secure Southern independence by the defeat of President Lincoln and the election of an opposition President "was spoiled by Jefferson Davis' peremptory declaration to Jaquess and Gilmore that he would consent to no peace that did not recognize the Southern Confederacy as henceforth independent. We believe," said Mr. Greeley, "that the visit of Jaquess and Gilmore to Richmond saved the vote of this (New York) state to Lincoln, though Sherman's capture of Atlanta, and Sheridan's victories in the Valley doubtless co-operated with the semi-treasonable follies of the Chicago Convention and Platform, to render the general triumph of Lincoln more complete and overwhelming."

Mr. Greeley's statement in the *Tribune* that the vote of the state of New York was saved to Lincoln by the Jaquess-Gilmore Mission may to some seem extravagant, but a consideration of the known facts in the case cannot fail to convince the candid reader that it was unquestionably correct.

The aggregate popular vote in the state of New York for both Lincoln and McClellan in the election of 1864 was 730,712, of which President Lincoln received a majority of only 6,740, which is less than one per cent of the total vote cast for both candidates. It would, therefore, have required the change of only 3,371 votes from Lincoln to McClellan, or less than one-half of one per cent of the entire vote cast, to have carried the state, with its thirty-three electoral votes, for McClellan. In other words, if in the state of New York, at that election, one voter in two hundred had been by those Davis declarations which appeared in the Gilmore magazine article induced to vote for Lincoln instead of McClellan it saved the state to President Lincoln.

And no one at all familiar with conditions as they existed at that time can fail to believe that the Gilmore article exerted an influence many times greater than was required to win President Lincoln one voter in two hundred of those who by

the deluding peace pretensions had become inclined to the support of McClellan.

The great victories under Sherman and Sheridan kindled the fire of enthusiasm in the prosecution of the war, *but the Gilmore article told the people how to vote*. Those victories were attended by great loss of life and property, and the people had come to hope that peace might be obtained without having to pay for it such a terrible price. They were pained at the thought of the great losses sustained by the enemy in those battles, and their hearts were crushed by the loss of their own loved ones in winning those victories. For these reasons the magnificent victories in the field, while very helpful to the Union cause, in the Presidential campaign did not so increase the vote for Mr. Lincoln as to have caused his re-election without the Gilmore disclosures. While the victories in the field strengthened and stimulated the hope of the people that the war could soon be brought to a successful issue by military operations, the declarations of Mr. Davis convinced the people that peace could be secured by no other method.

It has been customary to regard President Lincoln's triumph at the polls as overwhelming. Of the electoral votes cast Mr. Lincoln received 212, while only 21 were cast for his opponent. I was present in the joint session of the two houses when those electoral votes were counted, and the victory at that time seemed very great. But, even at this late period, it is startling to consider by what a small margin that victory was won. To show how very narrow was our escape at that election, and to indicate what must have been achieved by the disclosures of the Jaquess-Gilmore interview with Jefferson Davis, and their nation-wide publicity, the following statistics are commended to the reader's careful consideration:

## POPULAR VOTE OF SIX STATES IN

1864

States	Lincoln	McClellan	Majority	Electors
New Hampshire...	38,661	33,724	4,937	5
Connecticut .....	44,693	42,288	2,405	6
New York.....	368,726	361,986	6,740	33
Pennsylvania .....	323,101	288,657	34,444	26
Indiana .....	150,422	130,233	20,189	13
Illinois .....	189,487	158,349	31,138	16
Total .....				99

A glance at the third column of the above figures shows how very small were President Lincoln's popular majorities in the six states above mentioned. An examination of those majorities shows us that a change from Lincoln to McClellan of 2,500 votes in New Hampshire, 1,250 in Connecticut, 3,371 in New York, 17,250 in Pennsylvania, 10,100 in Indiana, and 15,600 in Illinois would have carried all those states with their 99 electoral votes for McClellan. And with the 21 votes he did secure it would have given him 120 electoral votes, while only 113 would have been cast for President Lincoln.

There are times when contending forces are so nearly equal that a very small accession of power on either side will win a victory.

Victor Hugo tells us that the Battle of Waterloo was decided by a shepherd boy shaking his head in answer to a question by Napoleon.

So nearly equal were the contending forces in our Presidential campaign of 1880 that three words, "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion," defeated James G. Blaine, and made Grover Cleveland President of the United States.

And in 1864 conditions were such in the loyal states of the Union as to cause the disclosures of the Jaquess-Gilmore interview with Davis to exercise a deciding influence in the Presidential campaign then in progress, and to rescue the nation from the calamity of the defeat of President Lincoln, which would surely have been accomplished but for the influence of this divinely ordered and divinely prospered embassy of peace.

To achieve that result those two brave and consecrated Christian men voluntarily entered upon and courageously and wisely prosecuted their very dangerous mission, with no other aid or encouragement from the Government than permission to risk all in an effort so seemingly unpromising and full of peril.

#### CONFEDERATE TESTIMONY

When Mr. Gilmore's article appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* it immediately attracted the attention of the world and exerted a tremendous influence upon the attitude of European powers to the Confederacy. This fact caused Mr. Benjamin to send to Mr. Mason, and to the other diplomatic agents of the Confederacy in Europe, a letter in which he gives his version of the Jaquess-Gilmore interview with Mr. Davis and himself.

Mr. Benjamin's statement of the facts in the case are in agreement with the statements in the Gilmore article save only that he states that Gilmore and Jaquess claimed to be acting under the authority of President Lincoln. This claim, however, is contradicted by the letter of the envoys requesting an interview with Mr. Davis. Mr. Benjamin says:

"The President (Jefferson Davis) came to my office at 9 o'clock in the evening, and Colonel Ould came a few moments later with Messrs. Jaquess and Gilmore. The President said to them that he had heard, from me, that they came as messengers of peace from Mr. Lincoln; that as such they were welcome; that the Confederacy had never concealed its desire

for peace, and that he was ready to hear whatever they had to offer on that subject. . . . The President answered that as these proposals had been prefaced by the remark that the people of the North were a majority, and that a majority ought to govern, the offer was, in effect, a proposal that the Confederate States should surrender at discretion, admit that they had been wrong from the beginning of the contest, submit to the mercy of their enemies, and avow themselves to be in need of pardon for crimes; that extermination was preferable to such dishonor. . . . That the separation of the states was an accomplished fact; that he had no authority to receive proposals for negotiations except by virtue of his office as President of an independent Confederacy, and on this basis alone must proposals be made to him."<sup>11</sup>

Jefferson Davis' version in his "Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government," Vol. II., p. 610, corroborates both Mr. Gilmore and Mr. Benjamin as to the terms discussed.<sup>12</sup>

#### ERRORS CORRECTED

Very remarkable indeed was the vigilance with which President Lincoln guarded and kept all knowledge of this movement within the narrowest possible limits. This rigidly maintained secrecy, while necessary to its success, was productive of one very undesirable result in that the President's private secretaries, because of their lack of knowledge of the embassy and of President Lincoln's interest and part in it, were unable to write its history with the accuracy and faithfulness that characterizes the monumental record of war-time events of which they had personal knowledge.

Those very worthy gentlemen in their great work, "Abraham Lincoln, A History," in referring to Colonel Jaquess, say: "With some force of character and practical talent, his piety

<sup>11</sup> Benjamin to Mason, August 25th, 1864, *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, August 26th, 1864.

<sup>12</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. IX., pp. 211-212.

and religious enthusiasm touched that point of development which causes men to be classed as fanatics or prophets as success or failure waits on the unusual efforts to which they sometimes dedicate themselves."

This classes Colonel Jaquess as a prophet, seeing that his "unusual efforts" were marvelously successful, but as I have shown, and as is admitted in a statement by these same authors in their "History," and copied on a later page of this chapter, such a designation of Colonel Jaquess, though not intended by them, does not seriously conflict with the following characterization of the Colonel by General Rosecrans: "He is a hero—John Brown and Chevalier Bayard rolled into one, and polished up with common sense and a knowledge of Greek, Latin and the Mathematics."<sup>13</sup>

The same "History" further affirms: "Instead of trusting to Church influence he (Colonel Jaquess) at once addressed himself to the ordinary military channels for communication with the South." Of course he did. Colonel Jaquess never intimated that he had any thought of "trusting to church influence" to enable him to proceed on his journey. When he first asked for permission to engage in this work he said: "God has laid the duty upon me," but like the "remarkably level-headed man" Mr. Lincoln declared him to be, and like the true soldier he was, he said in the same letter: "If He puts it into the hearts of my superiors to allow me to do so I shall be thankful." Colonel Jaquess was an officer in the Army, and never for a moment had he lost sight of the fact that he was subject to military orders. As Ezra and Nehemiah asked permission of the king to obey the call of God to go to Jerusalem to restore the temple and the walls of the city, so Colonel Jaquess applied "to the ordinary military channels" as the only method by which he had any right to proceed with the work to which he was well assured that he had been divinely called.

In referring to Colonel Jaquess' letter to President Lin-

<sup>13</sup> Down in Tennessee, p. 240.

coln from Baltimore, the "History" says: "But Mr. Lincoln did not need any further report from Colonel Jaquess. To his quick eye this brief letter told all the writer intended to communicate, and much more which his blinded enthusiasm could not comprehend. . . . The President could not make himself a party to the well meant but dangerous petty intrigue. Colonel Jaquess was left strictly to his own course, and after waiting at Baltimore till his patience was exhausted, he returned to his regiment in the West to do better service as a soldier than as a diplomat."<sup>14</sup>

These very uncomplimentary and disparaging references to Colonel Jaquess and his return to his regiment should be read in connection with the statement that Colonel Jaquess, at that time, reached his regiment just in time for the bloodiest battle of the war—the Battle of Chattanooga, in which he performed as heroic and signal service as marked the record of any leader of a thousand men, in any battle of the war.

The intimation in the "History" that the President's failure to answer Colonel Jaquess' letter from Baltimore was due to his lack of interest in the movement and his wish not to hear further from the Colonel relative to that matter, is answered by the statement that when on the 1st of April, 1864, Mr. Lincoln was asked why he did not answer Colonel Jaquess' letter sent him from Baltimore, he promptly and with manifest surprise said: "I never received his letter." This fully explains why Colonel Jaquess did not receive a reply to the letter sent the President after his return from his first mission. That letter, as will be seen, was withheld from the President by his secretary, who, at that time, was in charge of his mail. It was natural and prudent, as I have already stated, for that secretary, knowing nothing of the Jaquess matter, to regard this letter as one which should not be given to the President; but the facts as here set forth explain the matter fully and show Mr. Lincoln's great interest in the mission and the difficulties which he encountered in giving it

<sup>14</sup> Abraham Lincoln, *A History*, Vol. IX., pp. 204-205.

encouragement and aid without giving embarrassing recognition of the Confederacy.

When President Lincoln read Colonel Jaquess' letter to Mr. Gilmore, in which he referred to his letter sent the President from Baltimore, Mr. Lincoln very earnestly said: "He has got something worth hearing. What a pity it is that they did not give me that letter."

Concerning Colonel Jaquess' proposition said "History" says: "President Lincoln saw clearly enough the futility of all such projected negotiations." But President Lincoln, as before stated, when this matter was first considered by him, declared that the proposition was "the first gleam" of hope he had obtained, and "that the higher powers were about to take a hand in this business and bring about a settlement." And as shown by his attitude toward this enterprise from the first, it elicited and held his interest and secured from him all the encouragement and assistance he could wisely give to it.

That it was understood by those who were associated with Mr. Lincoln in this enterprise that the President gave it his approval is shown by the following statement of General Garfield in a letter dated June 17th, 1863: "Colonel Jaquess has gone on his mission. The President approved it, though, of course, he did not make it an official matter."

In the "History," the plan which Jaquess and Gilmore submitted to Jefferson Davis is spoken of as "the plan of adjustment which their imagination had devised and which was as visionary as might be expected from the joint effort of a preacher and a novelist. . . . Mr. Lincoln had not thought of nor hinted at any such scheme to Mr. Gilmore, and he would not and could not have accepted it even if it had been agreed to or offered by the rebels."<sup>15</sup>

Fully to correct this serious error it is only necessary to remember that on the preceding pages of this chapter it is shown that the plan thus characterized by the authors of the "History" was carefully prepared by President Lincoln him-

<sup>15</sup> Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. IX., p. 209.

self at a conference held by him with Hon. Salmon P. Chase and that it had the approval of that distinguished statesman. "Visionary" indeed must have been the plan thus prepared and approved! The report of the interview with Davis, which in the above quoted paragraph is spoken of so disparagingly, was published at the suggestion of the President and Senator Charles Sumner, who was with Mr. Lincoln at the White House when that report was presented by Mr. Gilmore. And at Mr. Lincoln's request the proof pages of that report were submitted to him for revision before publication.

"History" speaks slightly of Mr. Gilmore as a "novelist." True, Mr. Gilmore wrote some very attractive and instructive books of fiction, but he was none the less a great statesman. So did John Hay; but John Hay was none the less a very efficient private secretary for President Lincoln, and became a great historian and one of the ablest and most effective diplomats in the history of the nation.

It should be remembered that when on the 6th day of July, 1864, Mr. Lincoln decided to permit the embassy to go to Richmond to seek to "draw Davis' fire," he realized that it would require great ability and adaptability, together with wide political experience, to accomplish that result. He therefore insisted that Mr. Gilmore should be the man to whom that difficult work should be entrusted. This ought to be a sufficient testimonial to Mr. Gilmore's measurements and to his high standing in the President's estimation.

On the 25th of July, 1864, only a few days after the return of Jaquess and Gilmore, just after the declarations of Davis had been given nation-wide publicity, President Lincoln in a letter to Abram Wakeman, Postmaster of the city of New York, referred to the Confederate Commissioners at Niagara Falls as follows: "Who could have given them this confidential employment but he who only a week since declared to Jaquess and Gilmore that he had no terms of peace but the independence of the South—the dissolution of the Union."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 171.

This reference by Mr. Lincoln to the Davis declarations indicates his full confidence in the disclosures made in Gilmore's report of the interview with the Confederate chieftain.

Furthermore, the authors of "History," in the chapter of that work devoted to the Jaquess-Gilmore mission in showing Mr. Lincoln's views of the Niagara Falls commission, quoted the foregoing passage from his letter to Abram Wakeman. How those authors, knowing President Lincoln's confidence in the disclosures of that mission, could have written as they did respecting this matter must forever remain a mystery.

"History" says: "The President would not even give the Colonel a personal interview." It was, as the reader understands, only to avoid publicity that Mr. Lincoln refused to have Colonel Jaquess call at the White House. But when he sent these two volunteer envoys out upon their dangerous trip he said to Mr. Gilmore: "Tell Colonel Jaquess that I omit his name from the pass on account of the talk about his previous trip; and I wish you would explain to him my refusal to see him. I want him to feel kindly to me."

#### A CONCLUSIVE CONFESSION

At the close of the chapter devoted to the Jaquess-Gilmore mission, "History" says: "On the whole this volunteer embassy was of service to the Union. In the pending Presidential campaign the mouths of the peace factionists were to a great extent stopped by the renewed declaration of the chief rebel that he would fight for separation to the bitter end."<sup>17</sup>

And that is precisely the purpose for which Mr. Gilmore joined this embassy, and it was to accomplish that result that President Lincoln gave these envoys the permission and assistance which enabled them to pass the army lines and visit Richmond. This was fully stated and understood at the time Mr. Lincoln, on July 6th, 1864, consented to the mission and insisted that Gilmore and not Jaquess was the one to get

<sup>17</sup> Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. IX., p. 213.

from Davis the declarations that would stop the mouths of those who were claiming that the Confederates were willing to accept peace without disunion.

When that declaration was secured by this mission all that was hoped for by President Lincoln and Mr. Gilmore was accomplished. The admission in "History" that "on the whole this volunteer embassy was of service to the Union," by silencing the clamors of the advocates of a Confederate-favoring peace is unwittingly a confession that the mission was a success and is a testimonial to the wisdom and courage of the men who conducted it.

I regret the necessity of correcting as I have the unfortunate errors which from lack of full information were published in the inestimable Nicolay and Hay biography of Abraham Lincoln, but I have endeavored to do so in a spirit and manner consistent with the high esteem I cherish for that great work and for its able and worthy authors.

All the facts stated in this history of the Jaquess-Gilmore Mission are matters of authentic record and prove conclusively that under God the disclosures of that Mission respecting the purposes of the Confederate leaders accomplished the re-election of President Lincoln and the preservation of the Federal Union. And to the two God-fearing men—Colonel James F. Jaquess and James R. Gilmore—who with such manifest wisdom and skill conducted that mission to its successful issue, the nation owes a debt of gratitude which can only be fittingly paid by a true appreciation of their motives, efforts and achievements.

No event in our nation's history more clearly shows the special favor of God, and Abraham Lincoln's transcendent ability and religious faith than does this wonderful embassy of peace.

## IV

### LINCOLN AND TEMPERANCE

**I**N Mr. Lincoln's thought slavery and intemperance were closely associated. He frequently referred to these two great evils, and his attitude to intemperance, like his attitude to slavery, is worthy of universal imitation. As the hand that wrote the Emancipation Proclamation never held title to a slave, so the lips that pleaded eloquently for total abstinence were never polluted by any alcoholic beverage. No feature of Mr. Lincoln's life is more wonderful than

#### HIS LIFELONG ABSTINENCE

from the use of strong drink. During the early years of his life habitual liquor-drinking was almost universal on the frontier where he lived. Conditions as they existed are thus described by him in his address at Springfield, Illinois, under the auspices of the Washingtonian Society, February 22nd, 1842: "When all such of us, as have now reached the years of maturity, first opened our eyes upon the stage of existence, we found intoxicating liquor, recognized by everybody, used by everybody, and repudiated by nobody. It commonly entered into the first draught of the infant, and the last draught of the dying man. From the sideboard of the parson, down to the ragged pocket of the houseless loafer, it was constantly found. Physicians prescribed it in this, that, and the other disease. Government provided it for its soldiers and sailors; and to have a rolling or raising, a husking or hoe-down anywhere without it was positively insufferable.

"So, too, it was everywhere a respectable article of manufacture and of merchandise. The making of it was regarded

as an honorable livelihood; and he who could make most was the most enterprising and respectable. Large and small manufactories of it were everywhere created, in which all the earthly goods of their owners were invested. Wagons drew it from town to town—boats bore it from clime to clime, and the winds wafted it from nation to nation; and merchants bought and sold it, by wholesale and by retail, with precisely the same feelings, on the part of seller, buyer, and bystander, as are felt at the selling and buying of flour, beef, bacon, or any other of the real necessities of life. Universal public opinion not only tolerated, but recognized and adopted its use.

"It is true, that even then, it was known and acknowledged that many were greatly injured by it; but none seemed to think that the injury arose from the use of a *bad thing*, but from the abuse of a *very good thing*. The victims to it were pitied, and compassionated, just as now are, heirs of consumption, and other hereditary diseases. Their failing was treated as a *misfortune*, and not as a *crime*, or even as a *disgrace*."

Not only was strict sobriety almost unknown among those early pioneers with whom Mr. Lincoln's lot was cast, but to abstain from the use of liquor was to attract attention and invite severe criticism, if not ridicule. Sometimes the abstainer was subjected to insults and violence; and such indignities were not confined to the frontier sections. Rev. A. Bristol, a man of exceptional worth and one of the most beloved ministers upon the Pacific Coast, in "The Pioneer Preacher," gives a graphic account of the violence with which he was treated by his fellow students in Oberlin College because of his total abstinence convictions and habits. And there was little effort to create a better state of public sentiment concerning the use of intoxicants. Many ministers and leading church people were habitual drinkers, and the attitude of the church towards intemperance was not such as to create a vigorous protest against the prevailing drinking customs.

Yet, even in childhood, Abraham Lincoln espoused the cause of **total abstinence**, and never deviated a hair's breadth

from its principles. He not only refused to drink when invited to do so, but, when only a small boy, he delivered temperance lectures to his playmates which gave promise of his later achievements as a public speaker. That he continued ever faithful to the cause of total abstinence is settled beyond all honest doubt by his declarations to Leonard Swett that he "never drank nor tasted a drop of alcoholic liquor of any kind."<sup>1</sup>

And it is very significant that this declaration of Mr. Lincoln made to one of his personal friends during his Presidency and given to the world by Mr. Swett in a carefully written statement, has never been weakened by any counter testimony.

In 1847, while a member of Congress, he was remonstrated with by a fellow member for declining to partake of some rare wines which had been provided by their host, when he replied that he meant no disrespect, but he had made a solemn promise to his mother only a few days before her death that he would never use as a beverage anything intoxicating, and "I consider that pledge," said he, "as binding today as it was the day I gave it."

When the specious argument was used that conditions in his mature manhood and in a home of refinement were unlike those under which he made that promise in childhood, Mr. Lincoln stated: "But a promise is a promise forever and when made to a mother it is doubly binding." It required a great degree of courage, and an unyielding purpose, for an ambitious young member of Congress thus to disregard the requirements of fashionable society at Washington, and be true to his total abstinence convictions and covenants.

Mr. Murat Halstead, an able and distinguished journalist, states that when on September 17th, 1859, Mr. Lincoln spoke in Cincinnati, Ohio, a number of young republicans called upon him at his rooms in the Burnett House, and during the interview one of their number ordered cigars and liquor for

<sup>1</sup> Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln, p. 463.

the company, which, by oversight, were charged to Mr. Lincoln's account with the hotel. "This displeased him very much," and in letters which Mr. Halstead saw and characterizes as "well written and extremely to the point," Mr. Lincoln expressed to the young gentlemen his disapproval of what had been done. He knew nothing of the affair until he saw the item in his hotel bill and he felt he could not permit the matter to pass unnoticed, nor allow himself to be held responsible for something which he had not authorized and of which he strongly disapproved.<sup>2</sup>

### THE SUPREME TEST

of Mr. Lincoln's loyalty to his total abstinence principles occurred at the time he received the notification of nomination as a candidate for the Presidency in 1860. As it was an occasion of unusual importance, Mr. Lincoln's friends at Springfield kindly offered to provide liquors for what they regarded as fitting hospitality to the distinguished members of the notification committee. When Mr. Lincoln learned of their purpose, he expressed his appreciation of their well-meant offer, and said: "I have never been in the habit of entertaining my friends in that way and I cannot permit my friends to do for me what I will not myself do. I shall provide cold water—nothing else." Mr. Lincoln's Springfield friends feared that his proposed strict adherence to total abstinence would make an unfavorable impression upon his distinguished visitors, yet no one attempted to dissuade him from his declared purpose; and when the notification ceremonies were concluded he extended the hospitalities of his home to all present by inviting them to partake of what he designated as "pure Adam's ale, the most healthy beverage God has given to men and the only beverage I have ever used or allowed my family to use." This charming little speech made a favorable impression upon his visitors, who seemed to enjoy the disclosure to them of their candidate's

<sup>2</sup> Tributes from *Lincoln's Associates*, p. 58.

sobriety and strong moral stamina. The incident at once attracted nation-wide attention, but was soon forgotten in the interest and excitement of the great campaign and the events that followed.

The press of the nation made very little comment on the affair and the interest it at first awakened disappeared so speedily that none of Mr. Lincoln's early biographers mention the occurrence. Mr. Lincoln, however, gave his personal testimony to its correctness, but expressed his wish that the incident be not given large publicity lest it should divert public attention from the far greater questions then before the nation. But the event was very significant, as it not only bore witness to Mr. Lincoln's habitual abstinence from the use of alcoholic beverages, but also furnished a landmark along the path of progress toward temperance reform.

On September 29th, 1863, in response to an address from the Sons of Temperance, President Lincoln said: "If I were better known than I am, you would not need to be told that in the advocacy of the cause of temperance you have a friend and sympathizer in me. When I was a young man—long ago—before the Sons of Temperance as an organization had an existence, I, in a humble way, made temperance speeches, and I think I may say that to this day I have never, by my example, belied what I then said."<sup>3</sup>

In 1865, when on the *River Queen* going to City Point to visit General Grant, President Lincoln was offered some champagne as a remedy for seasickness, from which he was suffering. "No, no, my young friend," was his prompt and emphatic answer, "I have seen many a man in my time seasick ashore from drinking that very article."<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Lincoln did not needlessly parade his total abstinence convictions and habits before the public, but in his personal conduct, though reserved and quiet, he was as unyielding as adamant.

<sup>3</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Coffin, Life of Lincoln, p. 489.

## A TEMPERANCE LECTURER

Mr. Lincoln was not only a lifelong and consistent teetotaler, but he was a zealous champion of the cause of temperance. From childhood until his voice was hushed in death he was heard pleading with all classes to refrain from the use of strong drink. He gave his hearty approval of every organization and movement for the promotion of temperance, and in his home city of Springfield he was for a time an active member of the Sons of Temperance. Previous to that, even "before the Sons of Temperance as an organization had an existence," as stated by him in an address to a delegation of that Society, he "made temperance speeches" and was actively engaged in advocating and promoting total abstinence. From that early period, the date of which Mr. Lincoln does not in that address definitely designate, he was active in temperance work until 1856, at which time he began to devote himself with great energy to the movement against the extension of slavery. During the period of his temperance work his efforts were chiefly against the drink habit, although he frequently referred very significantly to the drink traffic, and was for a time, as hereinafter shown, very active in promoting prohibition.

## HIS FAMOUS TEMPERANCE SPEECH

was delivered in the Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Illinois, on the 22nd of February, 1842. It was a masterly effort, one of the best temperance addresses ever published, and the first of Mr. Lincoln's great speeches to appear in print. It was published in full in the *Sangamon Journal* at Springfield, March 26th, 1842, and is in Volume I. of the Nicolay and Hay Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, and has been many times reproduced in periodicals, pamphlets and bound volumes. It is such a complete and characteristic statement of Mr. Lincoln's views on temperance that when his son, Hon. Robert T. Lincoln, was asked by the Rev. F.

P. Miller for his father's views on that subject, he replied by sending him a copy of that address.

At the time when that address was delivered, Mr. Lincoln had just passed his thirty-third birthday and was near the close of his eighth and last year as a member of the Illinois legislature. He was at the beginning of his high political aspirations, yet in no part of that speech is there the least disclosure of timidity or of that caution which frequently is manifest in discussion of the great reform questions by ambitious politicians. His arraignment of the liquor traffic, while dominated by a spirit of charity, is as vigorous, and his demands for the support of all good citizens in temperance reform as unequivocal and imperative as those of the most advanced advocate of today. Every note throughout the address rings clear and true, and every argument and appeal is fully up to date, although the address was delivered nearly three-quarters of a century ago, and early in the history of our first great nation-wide temperance movement.

Although delivered at the celebration of the birthday of George Washington, Mr. Lincoln's famous temperance lecture was not produced by that occasion. It was the product of many years of deep meditation and of a large experience in efforts to promote sobriety by inducing people to sign a temperance pledge. It stands out as a conspicuous and significant landmark along the way by which he reached his great distinction. It was given at the high-noon of his life, and will forever remain a revelation of what he had attained and a prophecy of what he was to become. Every glimpse we have of his attitude to the cause of temperance in the years that followed is in harmony with that address.

During the summer of 1847 a temperance meeting was held by Mr. Lincoln at the

#### SOUTH FORKS SCHOOLHOUSE

in Sangamon County, Illinois, about sixteen miles from Springfield. He had been invited to conduct that meeting

by Preston Breckenridge, one of the prominent farmers of that vicinity. The meeting was held in a grove near the schoolhouse, which had recently been erected, and was attended by the country people, who remained standing during the exercises, or found seats upon logs, stumps and branches of trees fallen to secure material from which to erect the new schoolhouse. Mr. Lincoln was

#### A MEMBER OF CONGRESS

at the time he conducted that meeting, and the reputation he had gained as a public speaker attracted a large audience to hear his address; and in the solemn hush produced by his superb personality and the fervor of his eloquence, the brilliant young statesman pointed out the evils of intemperance and earnestly pleaded with old and young to sign the following total abstinence pledge:

“Whereas, The use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage is productive of pauperism, degradation and crime: and believing it is our duty to discourage that which produces more evil than good, we therefore pledge ourselves to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage.”

This pledge had been prepared and signed by Mr. Lincoln, and on that day received the signatures of nearly all who were present. Moses Martin, a farmer's son, nineteen years of age, attended that meeting and was so impressed by Mr. Lincoln's address that he memorized the pledge which he signed, and at the launching of the Lincoln-Legion\* at Oberlin, Ohio, in 1904—fifty-seven years after the South Forks meeting, and when he was seventy-six years old—he led that great audience in repeating verbatim, with uplifted hands, the solemn covenant written, signed and advocated by Abraham Lincoln.

\* The name of this organization has since been changed to Lincoln-Lee Legion, to commemorate the total abstinence principles and habits of General Robert E. Lee.

Cleopas Breckenridge, a ten-year-old lad, son of Preston Breckenridge, before referred to, was also present at that meeting in the grove and was so deeply moved by the persuasive address to which he listened that when Mr. Lincoln said to him, "Sonny, don't you want your name on this pledge?" he promptly and eagerly answered in the affirmative; but being unable to write, his name was written for him upon the pledge by the hand that wrote the Emancipation Proclamation, thus binding him to the cause of temperance by bonds stronger than triple steel. And when far advanced in life, at the launching of the Lincoln-Legion movement at Oberlin, already referred to, he declared that he had kept that pledge inviolate.

Few scenes which mark the career of Abraham Lincoln are more expressive and significant than that which represents him as standing at a typical frontier gathering beneath the leafy branches of a beautiful grove, with his hand upon the head of this ten-year-old lad whose name he had just written upon a total abstinence pledge, and to whom he is saying in tones of never-to-be-forgotten tenderness, "Now, sonny, you keep that pledge and it will be the best act of your life."

Dr. Howard H. Russell, founder and first superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League of America, and founder and superintendent of the Lincoln-Legion, was instrumental in securing and making public information relative to the South Forks temperance meeting. While in Springfield, in 1900, he visited a drug store kept by Mr. Roland Diller, for the purpose of seeing the desk used by Abraham Lincoln while he was a member of the Illinois legislature. During the conversation with Mr. Diller, Doctor Russell, for the first time, heard the name of Cleopas Breckenridge, and learned that he was then living about sixteen miles from Springfield. With characteristic zeal, he prosecuted his search, and having some time later secured an interview with Mr. Breckenridge at Springfield, he received from him an account of the South

Forks temperance meeting. To the facts he then learned, further information was added until the fascinating story was obtained in its entirety. And it is worthy of note that this story contributed largely to the organization of the Lincoln-Legion branch of the Anti-Saloon League, and to the choice of the name by which that total abstinence movement is known.

In August, 1903, I was present at the conference of Anti-Saloon League superintendents, held at Winona Lake, when Doctor Russell read a written statement of his interview with Mr. Breckenridge, and asked the conference to approve of the proposed Lincoln-Legion movement, which was done with unanimity and great enthusiasm. Subsequently, when it was decided to launch the new movement at Oberlin, Ohio, where the Anti-Saloon League was born, Doctor Russell secured the presence of Moses Martin and Cleopas Breckenridge at that meeting, where they publicly gave an account of Lincoln's temperance work at the South Forks schoolhouse and at other places in Central Illinois. To the alertness and untiring perseverance of Doctor Russell we are indebted for the priceless information he secured concerning Abraham Lincoln's active and successful participation in the promotion of the pledge-signing feature of temperance reform.

It adds immensely to the unique character and significance of this story to remember, as I have already stated, that at the time of the South Forks meeting Mr. Lincoln was a very energetic member of the national House of Representatives at Washington, and a promising young statesman.

#### MAJOR MERWIN'S WORK

Mr. Lincoln's great interest in total abstinence was never more significantly manifested than by his action as President in furthering the temperance work of Major J. B. Merwin among the soldiers in the Union Army. Major Merwin was a rare man. With his pleasing and impressive personality were united superior intellectual endowments and ripe scholarship.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN 1847

Pledging Cleopas Breckenridge to total abstinence. From a drawing by  
Arthur I. Keller.

Courtesy of Dr. Howard H. Russell.

(See page 149)



He was the founder of the *American Journal of Education* at St. Louis, Missouri, and was widely known as a lecturer and writer of commanding ability.

In 1854 he first met Abraham Lincoln at Springfield, Illinois, and was for a time associated with him in a work, fuller mention of which will be given in the latter portion of this chapter. Mr. Lincoln became so strongly attached to this refined and cultured reformer that early in his Presidency he embraced with great delight the opportunity presented of securing his services in religious and temperance work in connection with the army.

The opportunity came on July 17th, 1861, when there was presented to President Lincoln a request, signed by prominent men, asking that Major Merwin be assigned to the work of inducing officers and soldiers of the Union Army to abstain from the use of alcoholic liquors as a beverage. As Mr. Lincoln knew that the Major was admirably fitted for that work the request met with his hearty response. Knowing Major Merwin since 1854, and regarding him as one of the ablest and most successful temperance workers he ever had known, he at once, and very gladly, assured him of his hearty approval of the work he proposed to do, and of his official co-operation with him in prosecuting it. To make this assurance of practical value, President Lincoln wrote upon the request presented to him the following endorsement:

"If it be ascertained at the War Department that the President has legal authority to make an appointment such as is asked within, and Gen. Scott is of opinion it will be available for good, then let it be done.

"July 17th, 1861.

"A. LINCOLN."

To this endorsement by the President were soon added the following:

"I esteem the mission of Mr. Merwin to this army a happy circumstance, and request all commanders to give him free

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access to all our camps and posts, and also to multiply occasions to enable him to address our officers and men.

"July 24, 1861.

"WINFIELD SCOTT,  
"Department of Virginia."

"The mission of Mr. Merwin will be of great benefit to the troops, and I will furnish him with every facility to address the troops under my command. I hope the Gen'l commanding the army will give him such official position as Mr. Merwin may desire to carry out his object.

"August 8, 1861.

"B. F. BUTLER,  
"Maj.-Gen. Com'd'g."

These endorsements indicate the esteem in which Major Merwin was held by men of high rank and give great weight to his testimony respecting Mr. Lincoln's temperance views and activities.

During the Major's work in Washington he frequently addressed gatherings of soldiers from the President's carriage, the use of which was given him by Mr. Lincoln for that purpose. General Scott was very enthusiastic in his approval and encouragement of this work, and after hearing the Major address the soldiers several times, he remarked to President Lincoln: "A man of such force and moral power to inspire courage, patriotism, faith and obedience among the troops is worth more than a half dozen regiments of raw recruits."

The President watched Major Merwin's work in the army with keen interest, for he believed in total abstinence, he had confidence in the devout, Christian man who was conducting that work, and being desirous of affording him every facility for prosecuting it, issued the following very remarkable order:

"Surgeon General will send Mr. Merwin wherever he may think the public service may require.

"July 24, 1862.

"A. LINCOLN."



HOWARD H. RUSSELL, D.D., LL.D.

Founder and first superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League and of the  
Lincoln-Lee Legion.



When in November, 1913, Major Merwin addressed a great Anti-Saloon League convention at Columbus, Ohio, a solemn and impressive silence fell upon the assembly when the venerable educator and reformer took from his pocket an old Daguerreotype of Abraham Lincoln, in which was enclosed the above order in President Lincoln's handwriting; and, trembling with weakness and emotion, deliberately and distinctly read its fifteen words with the date and signature. This little missive spoke volumes respecting Abraham Lincoln's profound interest in temperance work, which seemed of sufficient importance to call forth the hearty and unqualified written commendation of more than one hundred of the most prominent senators, representatives, governors and leading citizens of the nation.

#### REFUSED TO SELL LIQUOR

Hon. Leonard Swett, to whom we are indebted for the information here given, was one of Mr. Lincoln's staunch and constant friends. He was a man of unquestioned and unquestionable integrity and a very learned and distinguished lawyer. Any word from him respecting Abraham Lincoln may well be accepted as trustworthy. He was personally familiar with all the events in Mr. Lincoln's early life, and in an article prepared by him for a monumental work, published in 1888 by the *North American Review*, and edited by Allan Thorndyke Rice, editor of that magazine, Mr. Swett states that when, in 1833, Mr. Lincoln's business partner proposed to add liquors to their articles of merchandise, Mr. Lincoln strenuously objected, and carried his opposition to the extent of withdrawing from the partnership. The following is Mr. Swett's statement in the article mentioned:

"A difference, however, soon arose between him and the old proprietor, the present partner of Lincoln, in reference to the introduction of whiskey into the establishment. The partner insisted that, on the principle that honey catches flies, a barrel of whiskey in the store would invite custom, and

their sales would increase, while Lincoln, who never liked liquor, opposed this innovation. He told me, not more than a year before he was elected President, that he had never tasted liquor in his life. 'What!' I said, 'do you mean to say you never tasted it?' 'Yes, I never tasted it.' The result was that a bargain was made by which Lincoln should retire from his partnership in the store. He was to step out as he stepped in. He had nothing when he stepped in, and he had nothing when he stepped out. But the partner took all the goods, and agreed to pay all the debts, for a part of which Mr. Lincoln had become jointly liable."

In 1908, twenty years after this statement was first published, the German-American Alliance, a liquor-favoring organization, in its zeal to connect the name of Lincoln with the liquor traffic, with a great flourish of trumpets, published a facsimile of the liquor license which Berry, Lincoln's partner, secured. The license "ordered that William F. Berry, in the name of Berry & Lincoln, have a license to keep a tavern in New Salem," where Lincoln then resided.

The wording of this license shows that it was given to William F. Berry, and though "in the name of Berry & Lincoln," Mr. Swett's statement shows that Lincoln peremptorily refused to have anything to do with it. Other evidence of his determination, even at that early day, not to be in any way connected with, or responsible for the sale of alcoholic liquors is seen in his refusal to sign the bond which the Alliance published in connection with the license. To the bond was attached the names of Abraham Lincoln, William F. Berry and Bowling Greene. But the facsimile reproduction of that bond as published by the Alliance shows that Lincoln's name was not written by himself, but was probably written by Berry.

The world owes an immense debt of gratitude to the American-German Alliance for its publication of a facsimile reproduction of that historic liquor seller's bond. Before that publication, the reading public had learned from authentic

history the truth, as I have here stated it, about the tavern license, and Miss Ida M. Tarbell, who saw the bond in the official records, had declared that Lincoln's name was not attached to it by his own hand. But it is exceedingly gratifying to have her statement confirmed by the facsimile of Lincoln's name attached to that bond unquestionably by some other hand.

This is a very significant event in the early life of Abraham Lincoln and should not fail to receive the reader's careful consideration. At the time these events occurred he was an unmarried man, only twenty-four years of age, with a very limited education, without means, without occupation apart from the unprofitable business in which he was then engaged, having never held any public office, with no family standing or personal reputation to sustain, without any thought of future prominence that might make it especially desirable for his life to be as faultless as possible at that period; with no active temperance sentiment in the community where he lived, and without an associate to suggest or approve his decision. And yet, he promptly arose to heroic proportions of purposeful manhood, and stubbornly refused to have any participation or part in the traffic in strong drink. Viewed in connection with conditions and known influences his course in this matter seems to have been the result of special divine interposition.

The attempts which have been made to connect him with the liquor traffic through those early business affairs have only caused his name to shine with a brighter luster and his conduct to appear as revealing marvelous wisdom and fidelity.

It is a very defective and misleading history of Abraham Lincoln that does not contain the information that he was

#### AN ARDENT PROHIBITIONIST

There are three classes of temperance workers, those who favor the promotion of total abstinence by inducing people, young and old, to sign a total abstinence pledge; those who

believe in restriction and "regulation" of the liquor traffic by license tax and kindred methods; and those who believe in the enactment and enforcement of laws absolutely forbidding the manufacture, importation and sale of all alcoholic liquors for beverage purposes.

Mr. Lincoln belonged to the first and third of these classes; he was personally a lifelong teetotaler, sought to promote total abstinence by others, and as a means for the promotion of temperance he believed in and advocated "moral suasion for the drunkard and legal suasion for the liquor seller." He was quite as pronounced in his prohibition views and declarations as in his advocacy of total abstinence.

Mr. Lincoln never belonged to the Prohibition Party—there was no such party in his day—but long before that party was organized, before any state had a prohibitory law, before any great temperance organization was seeking to secure such a law, he was advocating the theories of government and proclaiming the principles of law that are the immovable foundation upon which the nation-wide prohibition movement of the present time is based. As early as 1842, in his famous Washingtonian speech at Springfield, he said: "Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total and final banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks, seems to me not *now* to be an open question. Three-fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues, and, I believe, all the rest acknowledge it in their hearts." This declaration was a message from the total abstinence camp of the temperance army calling for governmental re-enforcement in the battle then in progress to save men from the destructive results of the legalized traffic in strong drink.

#### THE HISTORICAL SETTING

of this impassioned cry for help reveals its immense significance. It was a wail of anguish in the heat of an arduous and unsatisfactory struggle against overwhelming odds. The address itself was in the interest and under the auspices of

the Washingtonian Total Abstinence movement, which began in Baltimore two years before, and had made great progress throughout the nation. It began its work among men addicted to the excessive use of strong drink, and its recruits were gathered from that class. Mr. Lincoln gladly welcomed this movement and entered enthusiastically into its activities. He was pleased with its dominating spirit and greatly delighted with its achievements. His heart was filled with joy when he saw it so successful that, as Senator Blair tells us, "In a few years six hundred thousand drunkards had been reformed."<sup>5</sup>

But he must have been shocked and saddened when he learned

#### THE APPALLING FACT

that, as the same authority states, "three-fourths of their number soon turned back to their cups and to conditions worse than those from which they had been recruited."<sup>6</sup>

Confronted with the fact that the great Washingtonian movement, the total abstinence features of which he had with good reason extolled to the skies, was able to hold to lives of sobriety only one hundred and fifty thousand of its six hundred thousand recruits, while the saloons succeeded in luring back into drunkenness four hundred and fifty thousand of their former victims who had signed the total abstinence pledge, Mr. Lincoln's practical mind, with tireless diligence, sought a more efficient remedy for the liquor curse.

He placed a high estimate upon the influence for good of the new associations into which these reformed men had come; but he knew there must be a mighty power somewhere behind the liquor traffic itself, giving it the tremendous strength by which it was enabled to storm the citadels of the reform forces, and drag back to re-enslavement three-fourths of those who with high resolve had taken the total abstinence pledge

<sup>5</sup> The Temperance Movement, p. 435.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 435.

and entered upon a life of sobriety and honor. And he was not long in discovering that the thing which gave the saloon its measureless power for evil was civil government. He also learned to his utter amazement "that many of the most zealous and active promoters of the Washingtonian movement discouraged all resort to the enactment and enforcement of laws against the traffic."<sup>7</sup>

Senator Blair, commenting on this fact, in his excellent work, says: "And who knows that the demoralization of public sentiment which the Washingtonians created in their opposition to legal restraint was not the principal reason why the cup of temptation and destruction was again put to the lips of the 450,000 who fell and perished in that last state which is worse than the first?"<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's patient soul was greatly troubled when he came to realize that state and city governments were arrayed against him in his kindly efforts to rescue his neighbors from intemperance. With great love and tenderness he had prosecuted that work, and the holy passion which burned in his heart burst into a flame of righteous indignation when he saw many of those who had been rescued cruelly snatched from the embraces of their rescuers and borne away in triumph by the licensed liquor forces. His great heart bled in pity, while his mighty brain diligently sought a remedy for a wrong so monstrous.

He had thus been brought face to face with the destructive influence and work of the legalized liquor traffic, and the unspeakable wrong of governmental complicity in that traffic. But he never acted hastily. He always took time to make diligent investigation before entering upon any great work, or announcing any important conviction. He had deliberately reached the conclusion which he repeatedly proclaimed, that intemperance was the greatest curse that ever afflicted the human race; he well knew that the liquor traffic was strong, and very securely entrenched in the commercial interests of

<sup>7</sup> The Temperance Movement, p. 435.    <sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 436.

state and nation, and that it would fight furiously against any and all efforts to reduce its privileges and powers. Therefore, he did not regard it as wise to bring on a general engagement with the enemy before making a most thorough preparation for the battle royal that would follow. He foresaw a struggle between right and wrong involving the fundamental principles of law, and the sacred functions of civil government. He knew there would be an immense work of public enlightenment required before a decisive victory could be won. To prepare for aiding that work he gave himself with all diligence to the study of foundation principles as taught by the best authorities. His course of study is revealed by his speeches during later years, which show that his basic conception of governmental polity and procedure rested upon the scriptural declaration that the purpose of civil government is "the punishment of evil doers and the praise of them that do well," and Blackstone's declaration that law is "a rule of civil conduct prescribed by the supreme power of a state commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong."

As Mr. Lincoln prosecuted his studies during the twelve years between 1842 and 1854, he discovered that every reputable authority upon law and civil jurisprudence in all civilized history constructed all their theories of government in absolute and perfect accord with the letter and spirit of those two declarations. And his mind became saturated with the conviction that government in all its branches and activities should be as the scriptures say, "The minister of God to thee for good, an avenger executing wrath upon him that doeth evil." He could not escape the conclusion to which those studies conducted him, and which he repeatedly stated in after years, that no wrong can rightfully be given the sanction and protection of civil government; and that the beverage liquor traffic, being wrong, must be forbidden and as fully as possible prohibited by civil government. These convictions became such a tremendous working force in Mr.

Lincoln's mind and heart that he longed for the opportunity to proclaim them, with conditions favorable to good results.

In 1855 the opportunity came.

#### THE MAINE PROHIBITORY LAW

had been enacted, and was proving so effective and satisfactory that in other states movements to secure the enactment of a similar law sprang into being and were conducted with great vigor and enthusiasm. In Illinois such a movement was inaugurated, and in 1854 Major Merwin, of whose total abstinence work I have already spoken, visited that state to aid in the campaign for prohibition. His first meeting was held in the old State House, in Springfield, and was attended by a notable audience. Mr. Lincoln was present, and at the close of Major Merwin's address, in response to repeated calls he came forward and held all who were present in rapt attention, while he luminously expounded to them the principles of law and the purposes and functions of government, which he had diligently studied during the twelve preceding years. In that

#### OLD STATE HOUSE ADDRESS

Mr. Lincoln said: "The law of self-protection is the first and primary law of civilized society. Law is for the protection, conservation and extension of right things, of right conduct, not for the protection of evil and wrongdoing. The state must in its legislative action recognize this truth and protect and promote right conditions and right conduct. This it will accomplish not by any toleration of evils, not by attempting to throw around any evil the shield of law; nor by any attempt to license the evil. This is the first and most important function in the legislation of the modern state. The prohibition of the liquor traffic, except for medical and mechanical purposes, thus becomes the new evangel for the safety and redemption of the people from the social, political and moral curse of the saloon."

## CAMPAIGN FOR PROHIBITION

The coming of Major Merwin to Illinois for the purpose of aiding in the campaign for state-wide prohibition, and his first meeting, at which the above statements were made by Mr. Lincoln, were exceedingly timely. The campaign for prohibition, of which that was the opening gun, found him well prepared to render yeoman service. His great interest in the cause is seen in the fact that at the close of the meeting he invited Major Merwin to be his guest, and devoted nearly the whole night to examining, with him, a copy of the Maine Law, and in commenting upon its provisions. And during the months that followed he engaged actively in the campaign, using in his speeches the same arguments and illustrations that were so effectively employed by him four years later in his debates with Douglas.

At Jacksonville, Bloomington, Decatur, Danville, Carlinville, Peoria, and many other important centers of the state he addressed meetings at which Major Merwin also spoke. And sometimes with other speakers, but frequently alone, he continued to advocate with great zeal, and as constantly as his professional work would permit, the cause of prohibition, until the election in the early summer of 1855. With the results of the election Mr. Lincoln was sorely disappointed, especially the defeat of the prohibitory law. Of this he spoke with great sorrow in a letter to Judge Whitney, dated June 7th, 1855.

During this campaign Mr. Lincoln frequently made use of the following statements: "This legalized liquor traffic, as carried on in the saloons and grogshops, is the tragedy of civilization. Good citizenship demands and requires that what is right should not only be made known, but be made prevalent; and that what is evil should not only be defeated, but destroyed. The saloon has proved itself to be the greatest foe, the most blighting curse of our modern civilization, and this is why I am a practical prohibitionist.

—

"We must not be satisfied until the public sentiment of this state, and the individual conscience shall be instructed to look upon the saloonkeeper and the liquor seller, with all the license each can give him, as simply and only a privileged malefactor—a criminal.

"The real issue in this controversy, the one pressing upon every mind that gives the subject careful consideration, is that legalizing the manufacture, sale and use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage is a wrong—as all history and every development of the traffic proves it to be—a moral, social, and political wrong."

His attitude towards the saloon may be summed up in his striking and laconic expression, "The liquor traffic has defenders but no defense."

The Hon. Elihu B. Washburne, one of the ablest and most influential men of Illinois during the war period, and long into the eighties, was one of Mr. Lincoln's devoted friends. There is, therefore, peculiar significance in the statement which he makes that "when the whole truth is disclosed of Mr. Lincoln's life during the years 1854-55 it will throw the flood of new light on the character of Mr. Lincoln and will add new luster to his greatness and his patriotism." In this statement Mr. Washburne must have referred to the work for prohibition in Illinois, in which Mr. Lincoln was engaged during those years, for there was nothing else in Mr. Lincoln's life during that period to justify such a statement.

#### A DYNAMIC DELIVERANCE

was the speech of Mr. Lincoln at Clinton, Illinois, in 1855 in defense of fifteen women of that city who were being prosecuted by a saloonkeeper under an indictment for the destruction of his property. They had entered his saloon together and with axes and hammers had smashed bottles, barrels and demijohns after he had persisted in selling their husbands liquor, in spite of their tearful entreaties that he would cease to do so. Mr. Lincoln, being present, watched

the trial with great interest. He was not employed to defend the accused women, but as their case was not being satisfactorily conducted, he consented to address the court and jury in their defense, in the course of which he said: "In this case I would change the order of the indictment and have it read, *The State vs. Mr. Whiskey*, instead of *The State vs. The Ladies*, and touching this question there are three laws: First, the law of self-protection; second, the law of the statute; third, the law of God. The law of self-protection is the law of necessity, as shown when our fathers threw the tea into the Boston Harbor, and in asserting their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This is the defense of these women. The man who has persisted in selling whiskey has had no regard for their well-being or the welfare of their husbands and sons. He has had no fear of God or regard for man; neither has he had any regard for the laws of the statute. No jury can fix any damage or punishment for any violation of the moral law. The course pursued by this liquor dealer has been for the demoralization of society. His groggery has been a nuisance. These women, finding all moral suasion of no avail with this fellow, impervious to all tender appeal, alike regardless of their prayers and tears, in order to protect their households and promote the welfare of the community, united to suppress the nuisance. The good of society demanded its suppression. They accomplished what otherwise could not have been done."

In his life of Lincoln, Wm. H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner, in giving an account of this trial, says: "Lincoln gave some of his own observations on the ruinous effects of whiskey on society."<sup>9</sup>

Never were the reasons which call for the enactment and enforcement of laws prohibiting the beverage liquor traffic stated with greater clearness than in that speech which was made by Abraham Lincoln three years before his debates with Douglas. Its statements of law, its characterization of the

<sup>9</sup> Vol. II., pp. 12, 13.

saloon, its full and fearless enunciation of human rights and duties, and its felicitous and forceful language, place it in a class with Mr. Lincoln's best literary productions. It has stood for more than three score years and will ever stand a sufficient and unanswerable argument against the perpetuation of the saloon. It contains nothing that could be wisely omitted, and lacks nothing which the most advanced enlightenment can supply.\*

Mr. Lincoln's participation in the campaign for prohibition in Illinois in 1854-55 was inevitable. With his strong altruistic impulses, his attitude of uncompromising hostility to the liquor traffic, and his thorough knowledge of the divine origin and sacred mission of civil government, he could not have remained silent while such a movement was in progress in his state.

His championship of the Maine law was quite unlike that of other speakers. Although I was only seventeen years old at that time, I was upon the platform advocating prohibition in my native Ohio, and, like other speakers, I depicted the harmfulness of the liquor traffic and the beneficent results of anti-liquor legislation; but Mr. Lincoln, in his speeches, went to the foundation of the subject and demanded prohibition upon the fundamental principle that as the declared mission and purpose of law was to promote right and prohibit wrong, government could not rightfully sustain to the beverage liquor traffic any other attitude than that of absolute and unyielding hostility. His participation in that campaign for prohibition in Illinois was the legitimate and logical result of all his previous life, and, as we shall see later in this chapter, was also in perfect accord with the position which he maintained during all the years that followed.

There is ample reason for believing that Mr. Lincoln

\*It will be observed that Mr. Lincoln did not attempt to disprove any of the charges made against the women, but assuming they had done as was alleged, he insisted that it was a justifiable act of self-defense, and the court evidently concurred in that opinion, for the saloon smashers were released and nothing more was ever heard of the prosecution.

looked upon his public participation in that campaign for prohibition as the beginning of a work which he would continue to prosecute with diligence during succeeding years. He was not the man to engage in a battle with the intention of turning back before the victory was won. He had been for years anticipating a day of nation-wide, even world-wide, triumph, when there would not be one slave or one drunkard in all the world. He had expressed the hope for the coming of such a day in his famous Washingtonian speech in 1842, and the declaration of that aspiration and hope was more than a lofty flight of eloquence; it was a prophetic vision which he beheld as he wrought untiringly against the two great evils—slavery and intemperance, which were ever associated in his thoughts and purposes. And that his vision of the day of victory was connected with a purpose to aid as he might be able in hastening its coming, is shown by his letter to Pickett, written on the day he delivered that address, in which is found the slogan: "Recruit for victory." The unfolding of a muster-roll for recruits to the antislavery and anti-liquor armies implied that his own name had in his purposes been entered in the list of volunteers to serve during the war against the two evils. Everything goes to show that it was at that time his purpose to continue actively in the struggle for prohibition. But he was abruptly turned aside from his purpose by the unexpected entrance into the pro-slavery propaganda of a movement for the extension of slavery. The contest thus suddenly brought on was, in Mr. Lincoln's opinion, foremost and supreme, and he turned from all else—even from his professional work, to resist the aggressions of the slave power.

#### MR. LINCOLN'S SPECIAL PREPARATION

That he entered the arena thoroughly prepared for that battle of giants every one knows; that his special preparation was made during the twelve years between his retirement from public life in 1842 and the introduction by Douglas

of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854, which brought on the contest, is also beyond question. But during that period Mr. Lincoln was not engaged either in any warfare against slavery or in preparation for such a warfare. He was always opposed to slavery, but he was debarred by the national Constitution from interfering with it in the states where it existed. And nothing pertaining to slavery was an issue before the people during those years. There was, therefore, no occasion, either actual or prospective, for Mr. Lincoln to be engaged in a preparation for such a contest; but there were many reasons why he should be engaged in making the most ample preparation for a titanic struggle with the traffic in strong drink.

And with such strength of intellect; with such absolute and unswerving honesty; with such profound sincerity, and with such patient perseverance did Mr. Lincoln prosecute his studies in preparation for the latter that there came a time when it could truthfully be said that in all the world there was not his superior in a knowledge of fundamental law and its application to the responsibilities and duties of civil government.

Douglas had devoted years to preparation for defending his Popular Sovereignty theories, and with all the world in ignorance of his plans for the extension of slavery no one was preparing to answer his arguments in defense of his cherished schemes. He cunningly stole a march on the forces of freedom and took them and the nation by surprise when in 1854 he rushed into the arena with his Kansas-Nebraska Bill, thoroughly prepared to defend it with its slavery-favoring repeal of the Missouri Compromise. But to his great surprise and to the amazement of the nation, he was met by Lincoln more fully prepared than himself for the conflict, and able, through his familiarity with the fundamental principles of law to expose his sophistry and fully answer his arguments.

Douglas was the master-mind of his party and was accus-

tomed to encounters with Sumner, Seward, Chase and other scarcely less distinguished associates in the senate of the United States. But when he grappled with Lincoln in discussion he declared him to be without a peer in his knowledge of the fundamental principles of government. "You understand these questions better than does any other man in the nation," said Douglas to Lincoln after their first encounter in the fifties, and the "Little Giant" asked for and secured a truce with Lincoln during the remainder of the campaign. He could successfully cope with the strongest antislavery champions in the senate, but he felt himself overmastered when he encountered Lincoln.

The nation was amazed at Lincoln's wonderful equipment for the struggle with Douglas. But the people of Illinois, who before the debates with Douglas had heard Mr. Lincoln's speeches for temperance reform, knew that it was by his painstaking and prolonged studies of prohibition that he had attained to the matchless mastery of fundamental truth which made him the foremost champion of freedom in the struggles against the extension of slavery. The thunderbolts of law and logic with which he demolished the Popular Sovereignty fallacy which Douglas had so skillfully constructed, were prepared by Lincoln to be used by him in bombarding the entrenchments which civil government had built around the liquor traffic.

It is recorded that a ranchman in Africa, when he discovered that a lion was preying upon his herds, went out suitably armed to slay the marauder. As he proceeded in his hunt a huge tiger leaped from the jungle and bore down upon him with the evident purpose of gratifying his man-eating propensities. Promptly the hunter turned upon the tiger the heavily-loaded gun he intended for the lion, and found it quite equal to the unexpected emergency. He killed the tiger with the weapon he had prepared for the slaughter of the lion. By substituting the liquor traffic for the lion and slavery for the tiger in this fragment of history we have

the story of Lincoln's unconscious preparation for his contest with Douglas and his successful warfare against slavery.

And in his last interview with Major Merwin, on the day of his assassination, he referred to that statement in his speech in 1842, and said: "After reconstruction the next great question will be the overthrow of the liquor traffic."

The declaration of Mr. Lincoln's party in 1856 that polygamy and slavery were "twin relics of barbarism," did not to any great extent absorb his attention, for he had long regarded the liquor traffic as the only wrong sufficiently heinous to be designated as the twin of slavery. Hence, his opposition to the liquor traffic was based upon the same fundamental principles as was his warfare against slavery. And when he was prepared successfully to advocate prohibition he was fully equipped to oppose slavery; nor can that traffic remain one hour under the protection or by the permission of law without a violation of the sacred obligations of civil government as stated and expounded by Abraham Lincoln in his warfare against slavery.

#### THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL PLATFORMS

of 1856 and 1860 state clearly and unequivocally the principles upon which the movement for the prohibition of the liquor traffic is based. The platform of 1856 declared "that the Constitution confers upon Congress sovereign power over the Territories of the United States for their government." To that claim the national convention of 1860 added the following: "We deny the authority of Congress, of a Territorial legislature, or of any individual to give legal existence to slavery in any territory of the United States."

Standing upon these two planks of his party's national platforms of principles, Abraham Lincoln, in 1860, was triumphantly elected President of the United States and neither he nor his party ever receded or deviated from the position taken in those two declarations.

Sovereign right to govern, but not the right to give legal standing to slavery! There must have been some good and sufficient ground for denying the authority of Congress to give legal existence to slavery in the realm over which it had sovereign power to rule. That ground was many times and very clearly stated by Mr. Lincoln to be "the assumption that slavery is wrong."

Because it was wrong, and for no other reason, it was held that slavery could not be given legal existence in the territories of the nation. For the same reason slavery could not rightfully be admitted in any portion of the national domain where it did not at that time exist. This is implied in the above declaration of the republican party as explained and defended by Abraham Lincoln. And as that declaration of the republican party respecting slavery is based upon fundamental law, it must be true that no power has the right to give legal existence to any admitted wrong. This was Mr. Lincoln's belief, and he repeatedly applied that rule to the liquor traffic. He regarded that traffic as inherently wrong, and advocated its prohibition upon that ground. In so doing he was simply applying to another evil the fundamental principles upon which he opposed the extension of slavery.

#### OPPOSED TO LICENSE

Mr. Lincoln was always opposed to the license method of dealing with the liquor traffic. There is no word from him, either written or spoken, in approval of that system.

During his campaign for a prohibitory law in Illinois in 1854-55 he kept it before the people that a license tax could not fail to fasten the liquor traffic more securely upon the community. He was very pronounced in his declarations that such would be the case. It is remarkable that while high license was first suggested and approved by temperance workers as a means for promoting temperance reform, and has been advocated by distinguished champions of temperance even in recent years, when the matter was first brought to his atten-

tion, Mr. Lincoln emphatically declared that every dollar paid by the saloon as a license tax would be an entrenchment for the liquor traffic and make it more difficult ever to suppress it. "Never by licensing an evil can the evil be removed or weakened," was his oft-repeated declaration during his efforts to secure the adoption of a prohibitory law by the people of that state in 1855. Mr. Lincoln saw this clearly even at that early date, because of his thorough knowledge of the fundamental principles of government and the inevitable result of taking tribute of that which is wrong. His whole nature revolted against the thought of the license system, and as a young politician and reformer I learned from his teachings the exceedingly objectionable and harmful nature of the liquor license policy. And if during later years, in my hostility to the license system, I have at times been in advance of some of my associates in the temperance work, it has been because of my unyielding adherence to the teachings of Abraham Lincoln.

Mr. Lincoln strenuously objected also to the section of

#### THE INTERNAL REVENUE MEASURE

that placed a tax upon alcoholic liquors for the support of the national government. "That tax," said he, "will tend to perpetuate the liquor traffic and I cannot consent to aid in doing that."

"But," said Secretary Chase, the author of that revenue law, "Mr. President, this is a war measure. It is only a temporary measure for a present emergency, and cannot fasten the liquor traffic upon the nation, for it will be repealed as soon as the war is ended."

While that Internal Revenue bill was under consideration in Congress it was well known that President Lincoln, for reasons already stated, was strongly opposed to its liquor license provision and was inclined to veto the measure unless that feature was removed. He did not mince matters, but was very pronounced and outspoken in the expression of his

convictions. This is quite remarkable, in view of the low level of moral purpose in governmental affairs entertained by many leading statesmen of that period. That low level of moral purpose is indicated by the following declarations of Senator Fessenden of Maine, chairman of the Finance Committee of the Senate and subsequently Secretary of the Treasury. On the 27th of May, 1862, in his defense of the liquor tax provision of the Internal Revenue bill, Senator Fessenden said:

"The United States looking at it as a fact that this business as a business is carried on, and looking upon the luxuries and the vices of men as the most proper sources of revenue in the world, just lay their hands upon it and say, if you will do these things you shall pay for it; we lay a tax upon it."

The declaration that "the vices of men," as well as their luxuries, "are the most proper sources of revenue in the world," constitutes a very dark background on which appears the illuminated and thrilling picture of President Lincoln's attitude upon that question. And the President was not alone in his hostility to the liquor license tax; able and distinguished statesmen like Senators Wilson, Pomeroy and Harris, with others scarcely less prominent and influential, very strongly opposed that tax upon alcoholic liquors. On May 27th, 1862, Senator Wilson, who subsequently became Vice-President of the United States, in discussing this feature of the Revenue bill, said:

"I do not think any man in this country should have a license from the Federal Government to sell intoxicating liquors. I look upon the liquor trade as grossly immoral, causing more evil than anything else in the country, and I think the Federal Government ought not to derive a revenue from the retail of intoxicating drinks. I think if this section remains in the Bill it will have a most demoralizing influence upon the country, for it will lift into a kind of respectability the retail traffic in liquors. The man who has paid the Federal Government \$20.00 for a license to retail ardent spirits

will feel that he is acting under the authority of the Federal Government and that any regulations, state or municipal, interfering with him are mere temporary and local arrangements, that should yield to the authority of the Federal Government. Sir, I hope the Congress of the United States is not to put upon the statute books of the country a law by which the tens of thousands of persons in the country who are dealing out ardent spirits to the destruction of the health and life of hundreds of thousands and the morals of the nation, are to be raised to a respectable position by paying the Federal Government \$20.00 for a license to do this. . . .

"I would as soon have this Government license gambling houses, or houses of ill-fame; and it would be just as creditable to this Congress. I believe that such a provision sanctions the grossest immorality; that it will have a most deleterious effect upon the prosperity of the nation and the morals of the nation. For the sake of putting a few thousand dollars into the treasury, we, the people of the United States, are to give licenses to sell rum.

"The Senator from Maine (Mr. Fessenden) has told us several times since this Bill was before the Senate that our object is to put money into the treasury. I do not agree to the declaration. That we want to put money into the treasury is true; that the primary object of this Bill is to put money into the treasury is also true; but there is something over and above putting money into the treasury; and that is so to arrange this mode of putting money into the treasury that it shall not interfere with the business interests of the country, and, above all, that it shall not tend to demoralize this people and dishonor this nation. Every senator knows that this nation has been, and is being, demoralized by the rum traffic. Every man knows that our army of 500,000 or 600,000 men in the field has been greatly demoralized by the sale and use of rum. I saw a letter a day or two ago from one of the most accomplished officers in the service in the State of Kentucky, and he said more men in the army of the United States

were slaughtered by whiskey than by the balls of the enemy. Since this war opened we have lost thousands of lives by rum. Sir, with this nation suffering as it is suffering by the sale of ardent spirits, the Congress of the United States proposes to give its sanction to the traffic. I would as soon give my sanction to the traffic of the slave trade as I would to the sale of liquors. This nation comes forward and proposes to give a sort of sanction to the liquor traffic by taking \$20.00 out of the pockets of the men who by dealing out poisons to the people have wrung them from suffering wives and children.

"There is not a rum seller, or a friend of the rum seller, on this continent that will not welcome this tax. It will be hailed from one end of this country to the other by the whole rum-selling interest. If the rum sellers of the country had held a national convention they would have asked you to put precisely such a thing as a license to sell liquors into your Bill. Why, Sir, it has been the struggle of the retailers of rum all over this country for a quarter of a century to adopt this license system and to get licensed. . . . This act will be a source of gratification in every rum shop and low doggery in this section."

Mr. Fessenden. "To pay twenty dollars?"

Mr. Wilson. "Yes, they will rejoice to pay it. Why? They are under the ban of the moral sentiment of the nation today. Now you come forward and put in the pocket of every liquor seller in the land a license, give him a charter to go forth in the community and deal out his liquors under the authority and sanction of the United States. This Government license is a certificate of character. The liquor dealer will so regard it, and he will be proud to shake your certificate in the face of an outraged moral sentiment."<sup>10</sup>

This speech by Senator Wilson was in harmony with the views of President Lincoln, who, however, finally yielded to the entreaties of the Secretary of the Treasury, Hon. Salmon

<sup>10</sup> Congressional Globe, pp. 2376-2377.

P. Chase, and signed the bill, saying as he did so: "I would rather lose my right hand than to sign a document that will tend to perpetuate the liquor traffic, and as soon as the exigencies pass away I will turn my whole attention to the repeal of that document."

I was active in public life when that internal revenue measure was under consideration and when it became a law, and was connected with the government at Washington during the years that followed and I knew at the time, as did all my official and political associates, that for the reasons here stated Mr. Lincoln objected to the liquor tax provisions of that measure and signed the bill upon the promise that at the close of the war the law should be repealed. His attitude in this matter was a subject of common conversation at the time, and Major Merwin, who in such matters was more closely associated with President Lincoln than was any other man during all the years of the war, stated at a great convention held in Columbus, Ohio, November 10-13, 1913, that he had many conversations with the President relative to this matter and that Mr. Lincoln always spoke to him of the liquor tax as a bond to fasten the liquor traffic upon the nation, and avowed his purpose to secure the early repeal of that feature of the revenue law.

#### LINCOLN'S LAST UTTERANCES

on the liquor question came leaping from his glad heart on the day of his assassination, and were expressive of exalted purposes and confident expectations. On the afternoon of that day Major Merwin was a dinner guest at the White House. He came by invitation of the President to receive from him instructions respecting a very important mission upon which he was that night to proceed to New York City. After he had received his orders, and as he was about to depart, he was addressed by President Lincoln, who with exuberance of spirits said: "Merwin, we have cleaned up with the help of the people a colossal job. Slavery is abol-

ished. After reconstruction the next great question will be the overthrow and the abolition of the liquor traffic and you know, Merwin, that my head and heart and hand and purse will go into that work. In 1842—less than a quarter of a century ago—I predicted, under the influences of God's Spirit, that the time would come when there would be neither a slave nor a drunkard in the land. Thank God, I have lived to see one of those prophecies fulfilled. I hope to see the other realized."

Major Merwin was so impressed by this remarkable statement that he said: "Mr. Lincoln, shall I publish this from you?" "Yes," was his prompt and emphatic reply, "publish it as wide as the daylight shines." With those words ringing in his ears and echoing through all his being, "like the music of the spheres," Major Merwin started on his important mission for the President, and the next morning, upon his arrival at New York City, learned that the voice which uttered those words was forever hushed in death.

"Lincolnize America" was the inspiring motto of a great celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. In the direction of that high level the nation is constantly advancing, and its exalted summit will be reached when the people have come to understand and realize, as Lincoln did, the sacred functions of civil government and have driven from beneath the protection of law the destructive liquor traffic and all other recognized and admitted evils as it was Lincoln's declared purpose to do.

All who truly revere the name of Abraham Lincoln will aid that forward movement of the nation. All who hinder or oppose it will by so doing be disloyal to his memory and to the high ideals for which he lived and died.

## V

### LINCOLN AND SLAVERY—OPPOSED TO SLAVERY

“**W**HEN the story of our great antislavery conflict shall have been written, it will make one of the most ideal chapters in our matchless history.”—  
Hon. James M. Ashley.

No work of fiction excels in thrilling interest the history of Abraham Lincoln's relation to slavery. In it are found such contradictions blending into perfect harmony; such advance achieved by stubborn resistance of progressive influences; such painful reluctance in pursuing the pathway leading up to highest service with honor and renown, and such hairbreadth avoidance of disastrous blunders, as equal in interest the most fascinating dreams of the imagination. And no portion of history is more charming or more instructive than that which tells of the events in which Lincoln was the chief and unwilling actor in accomplishing the salvation of his country and in becoming the world's most distinguished and beloved champion of human freedom.

Seen from the viewpoint of the present time, those events are hard to understand. Slavery is gone and cannot now be seen as it appeared at that time. Conditions in all that region where slavery formerly existed have become so changed that it is impossible, by a retrospective view, to appreciate the violence of the struggle by which it was destroyed. All this, however, is better understood and realized by those who were active participants in the events of those memorable years, and others who were not may perhaps be able to imagination to stand in the midst of the earlier scenes of that period,

and thereby be able to discern something of the significance of the events connected with Lincoln's relation to slavery as they then appeared.

#### THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF SLAVERY

which must be considered if one would have a correct understanding of Lincoln's relation to that institution is nowhere depicted with more impressive force than in the official correspondence between the United States and Mexico in the negotiations for the transfer to the United States by Mexico of Texas and other Mexican territory. At that time, as at present, Mexico was regarded as far beneath the United States in point of civilization, enlightenment and moral standing. And yet, when at the close of the war with Mexico, that nation was forced to surrender to the United States a large portion of her territory, the Mexican commissioner requested that in the treaty of cession there be a section providing that slavery should never be permitted in any portion of that territory. In making this request the commissioner of that semi-civilized nation said: "If it were proposed to the people of the United States to part with a portion of their territory in order that the Inquisition should be established there, it would excite no stronger feelings of abhorrence than those awakened in Mexico by the prospect of the introduction of human slavery in any territory parted with by her."<sup>1</sup>

By no great statesman or orator, or by any brilliant writer of history or fiction, has the heinous character of slavery been more faithfully portrayed than in this request and protest from Mexico. And the brand of barbarism thus stamped upon slavery was in accord with the mature judgment of all enlightened people who had no financial or other interest in that institution. Even the decision of the Supreme Court of Great Britain in the Somerset case in declaring that slavery was

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Sept. 4th, 1847, to James Buchanan, Secretary of State, from Mr. Trist, U. S. Minister to Mexico.

so inherently evil that it could not rightfully receive the protection of civil government, coming as it did from a highly civilized nation, was not as severe a characterization of slavery as was that piteous plea of semi-barbarous Mexico that the territory ceded by her to the United States should be forever safeguarded against that institution.

But at the time this plea was made slavery, although thus branded as barbarous, was in such complete control of the United States, and ruled with such rigor, that in giving to Secretary Buchanan the foregoing information, U. S. Minister Trist said he answered the Mexican commissioner as follows: "The bare mention of such a treaty is impossible. No American President would dare present such a treaty to the Senate. I assured him that if it were in their power to offer me the whole territory described in our project, increased tenfold in value, and in addition covered a foot thick with pure gold, on the single condition that slavery should be excluded therefrom, I could not entertain the offer for a moment, nor even think of communicating it to Washington."

To the present generation this reads like extravagant fiction. It is difficult to realize that there ever was a time when the United States clung with such tenacity as is shown by this correspondence to an institution so objectionable upon humanitarian grounds to a people like the Mexicans of that period. But the foregoing quotations from official records made little impression upon the public mind, and were soon forgotten. This humiliating record, however, must be charged to the degrading influence of slavery and not to any natural depravity of the people who were identified with that institution. No higher qualities of mind and heart were ever possessed by any people than those which by an honorable ancestry were transmitted to the inhabitants of the slaveholding portions of the United States. The crossing of ancestral lines, the merging of distinctive and divergent characteristics, the mingling of the blood of patrician and puritan, the cultivation of the spirit of chivalry and the development

of Christian patriotism, combined to produce in that sunny Southland a people naturally high-minded and purposeful.

But the head that rested in the lap of the Delilah of ease and luxury was shorn of the locks of its strength, and slavery conspired with the Philistines of avarice and pride to pluck out the eyes of this Samson of the new world. Blinded to the high ideals of their noble forebears those chosen custodians of freedom became the proponents of slavery, and the hand that should have wielded the sword of chivalry in defense of the weak, wielded the lash of the taskmaster and riveted more tightly upon the limbs of men made in the image of God the galling fetters of cruel bondage. The wealth that should have sent the gospel to the heathen was expended in equipping vessels to plow the seas to capture them for slaves. This traffic attained such proportions "that not less than half a million slaves were imported direct from Africa and sold in this country after the slave trade had been declared piracy by law and by treaty with all civilized nations." And to such an extent did the virus of avarice enter into cavalier blood that during all the years of that inhuman piracy "but one slave pirate was ever convicted and hanged in the United States." The record runs that on February 28th, 1862, nearly one year after Lincoln's first inauguration as President, Captain Nathaniel Gordon was executed in New York City, the first and only case of the conviction and punishment of one engaged in the African slave trade.

In November, 1853, the *Southern Standard* remarked: "We can not only preserve domestic servitude, but can defy the power of the world. With firmness and judgment we can open up the African Slave immigration again, and people this noble region of the tropics."

In 1857, only three years before Lincoln was elected President, DeBeau's *Southern Review* stated "that forty slavers were annually fitted out in the ports of New York and the east, and that the traffic yielded their owners an annual net profit of seventeen million dollars." This statement shows

at once the motive for which slavery and the slave trade were clung to with such tenacity, and the depth of infamy to which a great wrong like slavery will inevitably sink even the best people if they become identified with it.

"The New York *Evening Post* published a list of names of 85 vessels, fitted out in the port of New York between the first of February, 1859, and the 15th of July, 1860, for the African Slave trade.

"The New York *Leader*, at that time a Tammany paper, asserted 'that an average of two vessels each week cleared out of our harbor bound for Africa and a human cargo.'

"The New York *World* declared that 'from thirty to sixty thousand slaves a year, under the American flag, are taken from Africa, by vessels from the single port of New York.'

"A yacht called the *Wanderer* ran into a harbor near Brunswick, Georgia, in broad daylight, in December, 1858, and landed a human cargo of some three hundred or more slaves direct from Africa. This fact was duly chronicled at the time in the Southern newspapers, and some of the blacks were dressed up in flaming toggerie and driven in carriages through the public streets, as a menace and defiance to the National Government."<sup>2</sup>

Such was the monster which confronted Lincoln at every step, and crouched for deadly combat when he crossed the threshold of the White House.

According to his unequivocal declarations, Mr. Lincoln during all his life was

#### STRONGLY OPPOSED TO SLAVERY

On the 4th of April, 1864, during the fourth year of his Presidency and while his enemies were furiously opposing his renomination, in a letter to A. G. Hodges he stated that he was "naturally antislavery," and that he could not remember

<sup>2</sup> Address of Hon. J. M. Ashley, Toledo, Ohio, June 2nd, 1890, pp. 18-19.

the time when he did not "think and feel" that slavery was wrong. These statements are in full accord with the record of his life. By no word nor act of which we have any knowledge did he ever contradict or to any degree weaken the meaning or force of those very strong declarations against slavery. His first known utterance upon the subject still quivers like forked lightning upon the horizon of that day in 1831, when he was but twenty-two years old, and stood transfixed by the horrors of a slave auction in the city of New Orleans.

On the 3rd of March, 1837, when Lincoln was twenty-eight years old and a member of the Illinois Assembly, he joined with Dan Stone, a fellow member, in a protest against some pro-slavery resolutions which had recently been adopted by that body. In that protest it is declared "that the institution of slavery is founded on injustice and bad policy."<sup>3</sup>

In the opinion of W. E. Curtis, as stated by Nicolay and Hay, this protest was "the first formal declaration against the system of slavery that was ever made in any legislative body in the United States, at least west of the Hudson River."<sup>4</sup>

This statement by Mr. Curtis is important in that it shows Mr. Lincoln to be a leader rather than one who followed in the wake of others. Slavery was not at that time an issue before the people, and had been forced upon his attention by the action of the Assembly of which he was a member in its denunciation of antislavery organizations and teachings. His sense of honor required him to express his convictions relative to the subject and, notwithstanding his youth and lack of experience, he did so by the unusual method of a written protest entered upon the journal of the Assembly, and thus made a matter of public record. From the hour he stood before the auction block at New Orleans until he delivered his second inaugural address, Mr. Lincoln's opinion of the character of slavery underwent no essential change.

<sup>3</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. I., p. 51.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

There were many changes in his conviction respecting methods of dealing with slavery, but there was no retreat from the decision that slavery was wrong; and with him that verdict could never be reversed.

Wesley's characterization of slavery as "the sum of all villainies" was the keynote of the antislavery movement until Lincoln, in his letter of April 4th, 1864, to A. G. Hodges, said: "If slavery is not wrong nothing is wrong." When that famous aphorism rang out upon the air the thinking world paused and seemed to look up in expectation of beholding an angelic figure sweeping through the heavens with a flaming sword ready to execute divine judgments. Instantly hosts of patriots joined in the new inspiring battle-cry and shouted Lincoln's burning words beside the blazing watch-fires of "a hundred circling camps," and throughout all the loyal regions of the nation. By the anxious members of the Union Soldier's family at their evening hour of prayer, by the ministers of God in the sanctuary of worship, in political meetings of the Union party, in caucuses and conventions throughout the loyal states; in lyceum lectures and in the debates in Congress, those words of Lincoln were repeated until they became a new confession of religio-political faith for the nation.

My participation in the political struggles of those momentous months enabled me to realize something of the tremendous potency of that unequivocal characterization of an institution which at that time was filling the land with anguish and woe. At close range I saw the patriot's eye shine with a brighter luster as he read or listened to those words. I saw the marching legions close their ranks because of the assurance that the period of vacillation and uncertainty was forever passed and that slavery was doomed to swift and certain destruction.

I heard "The Battle-cry of Freedom" sung with increased fervor after that declaration of Lincoln was published throughout the nation; a declaration which seemed to have

been written by a celestial messenger in letters of living light upon the dark clouds that hung above the field of battle.

Some writers who were not in touch with the loyal masses during those years, as it was my great privilege constantly to be, have failed to note the tremendous influence upon the people of that very striking statement of President Lincoln respecting the character of slavery; and I have failed to find in the history of those times any mention of the prominence given to it in the final debates in Congress upon the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery. Those debates were of greater strength and spirit than were the discussions of that measure in the senate and house of representatives during the preceding session of Congress. My own literary work in connection with those final debates began with the critical review of the first speech upon that measure, previous to its delivery in the House. I approached that work with mind alert and nerves at high tension, for I believed, as did the distinguished author of that speech, that on the final vote the amendment would be adopted. As I sat at night alone perusing the manuscript my blood tingled when glancing at the page before me I discovered that the first sentence was President's Lincoln's characterization of slavery; and as I proceeded with the work of examination I discovered that the distinguishing features of that able speech were cast in the mold of that famous saying. On the 6th of January, 1865, after preliminary motions had been acted upon, Speaker Colfax announced that the question before the house was the reconsideration of the vote at the previous session on the constitutional amendment, and that the gentleman from Ohio (Ashley) had the floor. The solemn silence which fell upon the audience was broken by the sound of a strong, clear voice, saying, "Mr. Speaker, 'If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong.' Thus simply and truthfully hath spoken our worthy Chief Magistrate." Instantly the mighty struggle against slavery was lifted to a high moral plane upon which it continued to the end.

In the Hodges letter Mr. Lincoln states that the views of slavery which he expressed in that famous aphorism were such as he had held during his entire life. His speeches and letters in which he refers to that subject bear witness to the correctness of that statement. At the time of the birth of the republican party in Illinois, on the 29th of May, 1856, in the first state convention of that party, Mr. Lincoln said: "The battle of freedom is to be fought out on principle. Slavery is a violation of the eternal right. We have temporized with it from the necessities of our condition, but as sure as God reigns and school children read, that black foul lie can never be consecrated into God's hallowed truth. . . . Can we as Christian men, and strong and free ourselves, wield the sledge or hold the iron which is to manacle anew an already oppressed race? 'Woe unto them,' it is written, 'that decree unrighteous decrees and that write grievousness which they have prescribed.'

"Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not themselves, and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it." <sup>5</sup>

It was a very unusual expression of his dislike for slavery, coupled with his unwillingness to interfere with it where it constitutionally existed, which led him in the Bloomington speech to say: "Let us draw a cordon, so to speak, around the slave states and the hateful institution, like a reptile poisoning itself, will perish by its own infamy." Federal Edition, *The Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. II., p. 273.

Similar in character were the declarations of Mr. Lincoln respecting slavery in his debates with Douglas and in his speeches and letters at that time. With characteristic candor he expressed his appreciation of the difficulties encountered by our fathers in dealing with slavery and his sympathy with the people who, by inheritance, came into the possession of property in slaves, but for slavery itself he had no words of

<sup>5</sup> Lincoln, the Citizen, p. 327, and Federal Edition, *Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. II., pp. 267-270.

sympathy or palliation. In language as strong as he could command, upon all suitable occasions, he declared slavery to be morally and unquestionably wrong.

Equally pronounced and unyielding was Mr. Lincoln in the zeal and determination with which to the very limit of rightful conservatism

### HE PROTECTED SLAVERY

It was sometimes difficult to reconcile his well-known hostility to slavery with his vigilance in shielding that institution from the assaults of its enemies. But with his intense abhorrence of slavery there was the most profound and conscientious reverence for civil government and for the constitution and laws of the nation. Mr. Lincoln was temperamentally conservative and his native gifts of reverence and religious regard for obligation were by his attitudes and activities developed into great strength and firmness. On the 27th of January, 1837, when he was only twenty-eight years old, in a lyceum address at Springfield, Illinois, he said:

“Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children’s liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling-books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, ’n short, let it become the political religion of the nation; and

let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay of all sexes and tongues and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars." <sup>6</sup>

At the time of this address Mr. Lincoln was a member of the Illinois House of Representatives, and only a few days later he caused to be spread upon the journal of that body the famous Lincoln-Stone Protest already referred to, in which he was careful to unite with the declaration against slavery the statement of belief that Congress had under the constitution, "no power to interfere with slavery in the different states;" and that the assertion of its power to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia was connected with the proviso that only "at the request of the people of that district" should that power be exercised. Thus very early in his public career did Mr. Lincoln show evidence of that temperamental conservatism which was so marked a feature of him during his Presidency.

During the period of Mr. Lincoln's retirement from public life, from 1848 to 1854, there was great growth of antislavery sentiment throughout the free states, and when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854 brought him into the arena, hostility to slavery was at a white heat and extreme methods of dealing with that institution were being widely and ably advocated. But Mr. Lincoln remained unyielding in his opposition to any and all interference with slavery in the states where it existed either by the people of other states or by the general government.

This is very remarkable in view of the furious battle in which he was at that time engaged to prevent the extension of slavery in territory consecrated forever to freedom by laws as binding, and covenants as sacred as it was possible for man to make. By a wide and plentiful distribution of literature and by stirring appeals from the platform and pulpit, there had been kindled fires of antagonism to slavery which sprang into sweeping flames when the hand of violence was laid upon

<sup>6</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. I., pp. 42-3.

the Missouri Compromise and Kansas and Nebraska were open to the entrance of slavery. It is no wonder that in the wild tumult of that hour some of the champions of freedom advocated a resort to extreme measures of resistance and retaliation, and it is passing strange that Mr. Lincoln was not swayed in the slightest degree by the fierce storms of excitement and passion that swept over the nation and arose to its greatest violence in Illinois and other states adjacent to the territory into which slavery was seeking to enter.

With seeming reluctance, yet without hesitation, Mr. Lincoln turned away from his coveted and congenial retirement and joined in the movement against the extension of slavery. An unwonted luster shone in his eye and his wonderful voice took on new qualities of strength and expression. With characteristic calmness and restraint he confronted Douglas at Chicago, when the latter returned from Washington, and a few days later, on the 16th of October, 1854, at Peoria, he delivered a speech of marvelous power, which immediately placed him at the forefront of the antislavery movement in Illinois and made him one of its leaders in the nation. In that Peoria speech Mr. Lincoln gave the most graphic and realistic picture anywhere to be found of the battles against the extension of slavery during the early autumn months of that memorable year. In reply to the claims of Douglas that there was not perfect agreement among the forces that were opposing him, Mr. Lincoln said: "He (Douglas) should remember that he took us by surprise—astounded us by this measure. We were thunderstruck and stunned, and we reeled and fell in utter confusion. But we rose, each fighting, grasping whatever he could first reach—a scythe, a pitchfork, a chopping ax, or a butcher's cleaver. We struck in the direction of the sound, and we were rapidly closing in upon him. He must not think to divert us from our purpose by showing us that our drill, our dress, and our weapons are not entirely perfect and uniform. When the storm shall be past he shall

find us still Americans, no less devoted to the continued union and prosperity of the country than heretofore.”<sup>7</sup>

In all of this startling description of those early battles is seen Mr. Lincoln's rare fitness for leadership in a great moral and civic struggle. Called from his repose as by a fire-bell in the night, and rushing into the fierce conflict he did not, for a moment, lose his mental poise nor turn his eyes from the pole star of national unity and constitutional obligation. In the midst of the wild excitement and mingling with the conflicting and confusing calls to action which rang out upon the air, his familiar voice was heard saying: “When they remind us of their constitutional rights, I acknowledge them—not grudgingly, but fully and fairly; and I would give them any legislation for the reclaiming of their fugitives which should not in its stringency be more likely to carry a free man into slavery than our ordinary criminal laws are to hang an innocent one.”<sup>8</sup>

At another point in that Peoria speech, after explaining the arrangement by which a white man in a slave state had twice as much influence in the government as did a white man in a free state, he said: “Now all this is manifestly unfair; yet I do not mention it to complain of it, in so far as it is already settled. It is in the Constitution, and I do not for that cause, or any other cause, propose to destroy, or alter, or disregard the Constitution. I stand to it, fairly, fully and firmly.”<sup>9</sup>

On the 24th of August, 1855, in a letter to his close friend, Joshua F. Speed, whose views were not at that time in accord with Mr. Lincoln, he said: “You ought rather to appreciate how much the great body of the Northern people do crucify their feelings, in order to maintain their loyalty to the Constitution and the Union.”<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., p. 260.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 234-235.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 282.

On the 29th of May, 1856, in Bloomington, Illinois, at the first republican state convention, Mr. Lincoln delivered one of the ablest and most immediately effective speeches of his life, in which, after denouncing slavery in as strong terms as he ever employed, he said: "Let us revere the Declaration of Independence. Let us continue to obey the Constitution and laws. Let us keep step with the music of the Union. In seeking to attain these results—so indispensable if the liberty which is our pride and boast shall endure—we will be loyal to the Constitution and to the 'Flag of our Union,' no matter what our grievance."<sup>11</sup>

In 1858, in his debates with Douglas, and in all his speeches during that campaign for the senate, Mr. Lincoln constantly maintained the attitude of loyalty to the national government and obedience to its Constitution and laws. Again and again, and in a great variety of ways, during that year, as at all times, he declared his unyielding opposition to all interference with slavery and his purpose to aid in safeguarding that institution in the states where it then existed. He did this without any retraction or modification of his repeated, unequivocal declarations that slavery was a great wrong and should be abolished or prohibited "wherever our votes can rightfully reach it." But he never forgot that slavery could not be rightfully reached in states where it existed, by any act of the General Government, nor by the people in other states, and he kept that fact before the people quite as prominently as he did his conviction that slavery was wrong.

On February 27th, 1860, in his Cooper Institute speech, after proving conclusively that "our fathers who framed the government" understood that the Constitution conferred upon Congress full authority and power to prevent the extension of slavery into the territories of the United States, he said: "As those fathers marked it, so let it again be marked, as an evil not to be extended but to be tolerated and protected

<sup>11</sup> Federal Edition, Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., pp. 273, 274, 275.

only because and so far as its actual presence among us makes that toleration a necessity. Let all the guarantees those fathers gave it be not grudgingly but fully and fairly maintained. . . . Wrong as we think slavery is we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation.”<sup>12</sup>

On the 6th of March, 1860, eight days after the Cooper Institute address was delivered, in a speech at New Haven, Connecticut, he said: “The other policy is one that squares with the idea that slavery is wrong, and it consists in doing everything that we ought to do if it is wrong. Now, I don’t wish to be misunderstood, nor to leave a gap down to be misrepresented, even. I don’t mean that we ought to attack it where it exists. To me it seems that if we were to form government anew, in view of the actual presence of slavery, we should find it necessary to frame just such a government as our fathers did; giving to the slaveholder the entire control where the system was established, while we possess the power to restrain it from going outside those limits. From the necessities of the case we should be compelled to form just such a government as our blessed fathers gave us; and surely if they have so made it, that adds another reason why we should let slavery alone where it exists.”<sup>13</sup>

Thus Mr. Lincoln came to the Presidential office fully and unequivocally committed to the protection of slavery as required by the Constitution of the United States. And into that great office with all its authority and power he carried a fixed purpose to be faithful and true to all the declarations he had made respecting the constitutional rights of slavery.

On the 4th of March, 1861, in

<sup>12</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. V., pp. 309-327.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 347.

## HIS FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

he said: "Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.' Those who have nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them.' . . . I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming administration. . . .

"I take the official oath today with no mental reservations, and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules. . . .

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect and defend it.' " <sup>14</sup>

In a still more striking and impressive manner did Mr. Lincoln in that Inaugural Address state his conservative views and purposes respecting slavery by approving of the following Constitutional amendment: "No amendment shall be made to

<sup>14</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., pp. 169-185.

the Constitution which will authorize or give to Congress the power to abolish or interfere within any State with the domestic institutions thereof, including that of persons held to labor or service by the laws of said State." <sup>15</sup>

This amendment was prepared and introduced by Hon. Thomas Corwin of Ohio, chairman of the committee of thirty-three, and had passed both houses of Congress by substantial majorities and was signed by President Buchanan. Referring to that constitutional amendment, which at the time required only the approval of three-fourths of the states to become a part of the national Constitution, Mr. Lincoln in his inaugural address said: "Holding such a provision to now be amply Constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express and irrevocable."

Had that amendment become a part of the national Constitution it would have made it forever impossible to abolish slavery by peaceable and constitutional methods. Yet, it was approved by President Lincoln and by his administration, through Secretary Seward it was sent out to the several states for their approval, and had it been accepted by the South it would undoubtedly have received the approval of the requisite three-fourths of the states and become a part of the fundamental law of the land. From that dire calamity the nation was saved by the mad assault upon Fort Sumter and the cruel Civil War.

<sup>15</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. X., p. 90.

## VI

### EMANCIPATION CONSIDERED

THE civilized world has come to recognize Abraham Lincoln as the divinely chosen agent for the destruction of slavery. This he accomplished by the authority and power of the Presidential office. But when he assumed the duties of that exalted station he was bound by an imperious sense of duty and by solemn promises not to interfere with that institution in the states where it then existed. That Mr. Lincoln intended faithfully and fully to keep his promises respecting slavery is beyond question. That he hoped to save the nation without interfering with slavery is also certain. That he earnestly and perseveringly endeavored to accomplish both of these results is now a matter of history. In so doing it became necessary for him to interpose his great authority and power as President to protect slavery from the assaults of his subordinates.

For a time this did not become necessary. In his call for a special session of Congress to meet on the Fourth of July, 1861, and in his message to that body, he made no reference to slavery and no action of Congress during that session was at variance with his declared purposes respecting that institution. Both branches of Congress were dominated by a spirit of exalted patriotism, all the acts of the President in the emergency brought on by the rebellion were approved and made legal, and even in excess of his requests provisions for the vigorous prosecution of the war were enthusiastically made. As the location and movements of the Union army were chiefly in the states where slavery existed, it was impossible to ignore that institution, but everything proceeded as fully as possible in harmony with the President's well-known policy. This continued without interruption for nearly five

months, when on the 30th of August, 1861, General John C. Fremont, in command of the department of Missouri, startled the nation, and attracted the attention of the world by issuing a proclamation in which he declared martial law and emancipation in all the state of Missouri. To make effective this proclamation, General Fremont convened a military commission to hear evidence and proceeded to issue deeds of manumission to persons held in slavery under the laws of the state. This proclamation produced a profound impression in all the loyal states.

General Fremont was held in very high esteem by the rank and file of the republican party throughout the nation. His early achievements in exploring a route for a transcontinental railroad and his gallant bearing as the republican candidate for President in 1856, caused him to be greatly admired by those who were proud to march under his banner during that memorable Presidential campaign. His appointment as a Major-General at the beginning of the war and his assignment to an important military command were hailed with a delight which burst into a flame of enthusiasm when his emancipation proclamation was published. But his action in this matter met the prompt and emphatic disapproval of the conservative element among the supporters of the Government and awakened serious apprehensions respecting its influence in the border states where loyalty to the Union seemed to depend upon the National Government maintaining its attitude of non-interference with slavery.

Having been of the number of enthusiastic young republicans who marched in the Fremont processions in 1856, and being an ardent abolitionist and therefore not fully satisfied with President Lincoln's policy respecting slavery, I hailed the Fremont proclamation with delight as the beginning of the end of slavery. And I am now making this historical record of the events connected with that proclamation by General Fremont as one who at the time was ardently attached to him and fully in sympathy with that movement against slavery.

General Fremont's great popularity and the intensity of anti-slavery sentiment in the loyal states combined to make it very difficult for President Lincoln to bring the General's action in this matter into conformity with law and with the policy he was pursuing toward slavery without causing serious division among Union people. Conditions at the time in General Fremont's department were far from harmonious and some who had been and were opposed to his course in other matters were not backward in claiming that the proclamation was intended for political rather than military results.

The controversy in General Fremont's department became very bitter and, although at first local, it grew to national dimensions and importance, by drawing into its contentions several prominent and distinguished men, including the Blairs, one of whom was a member of President Lincoln's Cabinet. This added to the difficulties and dangers encountered by the President in dealing with General Fremont's interference with slavery. But never did he seem to have been influenced in the least by the danger of incurring popular displeasure in disapproving of General Fremont's course, which he promptly did with that rare wisdom and tact that always characterized his treatment of peculiarly delicate and complicated questions.

On the 2nd of September, 1862, he sent to General Fremont by special messenger a carefully written letter, fragrant with the spirit of considerate kindness and gentle firmness. Respecting the portion of the proclamation that ordered the shooting of disloyal people found with arms in their hands, President Lincoln said: "Should you shoot a man, according to the proclamation, the Confederates would very certainly shoot our best men in their hands in retaliation; and so man for man indefinitely. It is, therefore, my order that you allow no man to be shot under the proclamation without first having my approbation or consent."<sup>1</sup>

With admirable frankness and candor Mr. Lincoln in that letter to General Fremont expressed his conviction that the

<sup>1</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. IV., p. 418.

portion of the proclamation that referred "to the confiscation of property and the liberating of slaves" would alarm Southern Union men and turn them against the government. This he feared would ruin the prospect of holding Kentucky loyal to the Union. "Allow me, therefore," he added, "to ask that you will as of your own motion, modify that paragraph so as to conform to the first and fourth sections of the Act of Congress entitled 'An Act to Confiscate property used for insurrectory purposes.' "

To this letter of wondrous tact and kindness General Fremont, on the 8th of September, 1861, replied at length affirming his conviction that his proclamation was wise and would prove effective for the Union cause, and asking the President to assume responsibility for its modification if he still thought such action should be taken. This was a most remarkable attitude for an American General to assume toward the President, the Commander in Chief of the Armies of the nation; but Mr. Lincoln was too great to be disturbed by the affair and "cheerfully," as he said, ordered the proclamation to be modified as suggested by him.

General Fremont's letter of September 8th to the President was by him sent to Mr. Lincoln by the hand of his wife, the brilliant daughter of the great Missouri senator, Thomas H. Benton, and the beloved "Jessie Benton Fremont"—whose name rang out upon the air as a republican battle-cry during the Presidential campaign of 1856, and was afterwards repeated as a synonym of exalted womanhood and courageous enterprise and adventure. Intent upon her mission to prevent the modification of her husband's proclamation, and to strengthen him with the President in the unfortunate controversy with his subordinates, she reached Washington at night and sought an immediate interview with the latter, calling him from his bed at midnight and pressing her accusations and demands so vigorously that in his account of the affair Mr. Lincoln said: "She taxed me so violently with many things that I had to exercise all the awkward tact that I have to

avoid quarreling with her. . . . She more than once intimated that if General Fremont should decide to try conclusions with me he could set up for himself."<sup>2</sup>

This incident illustrates the severity of the storm encountered by President Lincoln in his efforts to modify General Fremont's proclamation and to arrest proceedings under it so as to prevent the harmful results he believed it would cause. The President's apprehensions and his course in this matter are fully justified by conditions as we know them to have existed at that time.

The war had then been in progress more than four months and states permitting slavery had joined the rebellion one after another until only the border states were left undecided as to whether they would remain in the Union or unite with the Confederacy. President Lincoln was watching the proceedings with painful solicitude, fully convinced that the fate of the nation depended upon the decision of those border states and that the decision of Kentucky would determine whether the other border states would decide for or against the Union. He was very careful not to declare his convictions respecting these matters. He remained outwardly optimistic and studiously refrained from disclosing the appalling perils of the nation. But while thus concealing his apprehensions he was constant and untiring in his efforts to win the loyalty of the border states. He endured severe criticism for this rather than incur the risk of injuring the Union cause by an explanation of his course, even although it might be satisfactory to the watchful and anxious people. But the Fremont affair compelled him to speak, not to the public but to a close personal friend, and his disclosures to that friend leave nothing to be desired either in the course he pursued or the motives by which he was influenced.

The intimate friend to whom Mr. Lincoln made those disclosures was United States Senator O. H. Browning of Illinois, who, on the 17th of September, 1861, had in a letter

<sup>2</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. IV., p. 415.

to President Lincoln severely criticised his disapproval of General Fremont's proclamation. On the 22nd of September, 1861—just one year previous to the issuing by President Lincoln of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation—Mr. Lincoln replied to Senator Browning's criticisms in a letter marked "Private and Confidential," in which he said: "I think to lose Kentucky is nearly the same as to lose the whole game. Kentucky gone, we cannot hold Missouri, nor, as I think, Maryland. These all against us, and the job on our hands is too large for us. We would as well consent to separation at once, including the surrender of this capital."<sup>3</sup>

To read this disclosure of the nation's peril, even at this distant day, is like witnessing a loved one's hairbreadth escape from seemingly unavoidable disaster. We are filled with dismay, and shrink back as we are made to realize how very near we then came to a catastrophe more dreadful than any the world has ever known. And only in strict confidence and because he deemed it necessary did President Lincoln make known to his trusted, though at the time misguided friend, the perilous conditions through which the nation was then passing. This letter to Senator Browning was not at the time made public, and not until long after the dangers it revealed had passed did the people learn that at that hour the nation's fate was trembling in the balance.

Suddenly the storm broke. While President Lincoln was exerting every influence in his power to cause the Kentucky legislature, then in session, to take action against secession and in favor of the Union, and when the nation's fate depended upon the Government maintaining its attitude of non-interference with slavery, the Fremont proclamation of emancipation was issued and made public. We are not left in uncertainty as to the influence of that proclamation in the border states, for President Lincoln in his letter to Senator Browning, from which I have already quoted, in referring to this matter, pathetically writes: "The Kentucky legislature

<sup>3</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. IV., p. 422.

would not budge till that proclamation was modified; and General Anderson telegraphed me that on the news of General Fremont having actually issued deeds of manumission, a whole company of our volunteers threw down their arms and disbanded. I was so assured as to think it probable that the very arms we had furnished Kentucky would be turned against us."<sup>4</sup>

Before President Lincoln knew of the unfavorable action of the Kentucky legislature in his private letter to General Fremont, already quoted, he expressed his fears that the proclamation would be harmful to the Union cause among "our Southern Union friends" and ruinous to the Union cause in Kentucky.

A more unfortunate time for an antislavery movement could not possibly have been chosen than that selected by General Fremont for his proclamation of state-wide martial law and military emancipation. Conditions in the border states were made peculiarly unfavorable to its acceptance because of the tremendous efforts of the Confederate leaders to enlist those states in the rebellion. No less eager was President Lincoln to hold Kentucky to her allegiance to the Union than was Jefferson Davis to win that state to the Confederacy. There were certain leading men in Kentucky who, at that time, were believed to be able to control the action of the state respecting the Rebellion. One man—a journalist of exceptional ability—was believed to have sufficient influence to swing the state as he might choose to the support of the Federal Government or to the Confederacy. To enlist that great journalist on the side of the rebellion was the chief aim and effort of the Confederate leaders. Fifty thousand dollars in gold was the sum employed to carry out the scheme. According to autograph letters now before me, some written by the editor in question, and others by prominent Confederates, that sum was invested to purchase the influence which it was believed would cause Kentucky to renounce her alle-

<sup>4</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. IV., p. 422.

giance to the Union and join the Confederacy. The arrangements to accomplish that result were consummated and the time fixed for the carrying out of the agreement when counteracting influences suddenly and unexpectedly intervened and the whole scheme was brought to a disastrous failure. Kentucky declared her loyalty to the Government and aided very materially in the war for the Government's preservation. The correspondence shows that the fifty thousand dollar purchase price, although paid over, was not receipted for nor returned, and the goods were not delivered. Names and dates for all this could be easily given, but it would serve no good purpose. What I have here stated is given as an illustration of conditions as they existed at the time the Fremont proclamation was issued. These incidents also aid in explaining Lincoln's anxiety and care not to offend public sentiment in Kentucky, if it could possibly be avoided. To many loyal people his seemingly excessive solicitude to secure and hold the favor of that state was a mystery, and some were uncharitable enough to attribute it to partiality for it as his native state. But his letter to Senator Browning and the incident relating to the Kentucky journalist make it all plain, and show that in President Lincoln's opinion, and in fact, the Fremont proclamation was very inopportune as well as premature. This he states very clearly in the Hodges letter of April 4th, when he says: "When, early in the war, General Fremont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it, because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity." Another reason for Mr. Lincoln's disapproval of the Fremont proclamation was his conviction that when emancipation became a necessity, as he thought possibly would sometime be the case, it should be proclaimed and made effective, not by a general in command of a department with his small area of territory and his limited authority and power, but by the President with his nationwide jurisdiction and his great resources for making it uniform and successful. This, as we shall soon see, was prominent in his thought at a later period and probably had its

influence in causing him to disapprove of the Fremont emancipation scheme.

In addition to these considerations, each and all of which had influence with the President, the Fremont emancipation movement was in itself exceedingly objectionable to President Lincoln. He was careful not to refer to this in his official statements, for he realized that public sentiment against slavery was so strong and intense that a declaration by him against that emancipation movement would be misunderstood and would result in harm to the Union cause.

In his letters to General Fremont the President sets forth no reason for his disapproval of the General's emancipation scheme save his apprehension that it would have a harmful influence with the Union people of the South. This was doubtless due to the restraints of official courtesy and of diplomatic considerations. But in his letter to Senator Browning before cited, he lays aside all reserve and inveighs against the proclamation with intense severity. He declares it to be "purely political and not within the range of military law or necessity. . . . The proclamation in the point in question is simply dictatorship. It assumes that the General may do anything he pleases—confiscate the lands and free the slaves of loyal people as well as of disloyal ones. And going the whole figure, I have no doubt would be more popular with some thoughtless people than that which has been done! But I cannot assume this reckless position nor allow others to assume it on my responsibility."

In reply to the Senator's claim that it was the only means of saving the government, he says: "On the contrary, it is itself the surrender of the government."<sup>5</sup>

These unusually strong declarations of Mr. Lincoln's objections to General Fremont's attempt at military emancipation reveal the nature of the trials through which he was then passing and the extent to which that affair added to their severity.

<sup>5</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. IV., pp. 421-422.

The infelicities connected with this affair did not cause the President to take any action unfavorable to General Fremont, but on account of the bitter animosities in his department growing out of other matters, the President, after repeated efforts to avoid so doing, relieved him of his command and appointed General David Hunter as his successor. In the spirit of a true soldier, General Fremont retired from his command in a manner calculated to be helpful to his successor. But while the harmful influences of his untimely emancipation proclamation were so far overcome as to prevent immediate serious results, the hostilities engendered by it, like avenging bloodhounds, pursued Mr. Lincoln during all the remainder of his weary days.

In his plans to prosecute the war and save the nation, in his efforts to destroy slavery and in his candidacy for re-election those hostilities were ever present and added greatly to his difficulties and to the bitterness of the cup constantly pressed to his lips.

The loyalty of the border states having been won by a policy of non-interference with slavery, it was found necessary to continue that policy in order to hold their allegiance to the Union. This it became very difficult to do. The progress of the war was constantly producing changes and creating new and difficult complications respecting slavery and the colored people. The white slave masters fled from the approach of the Union army, leaving many thousands of colored slaves to be dealt with by the Government. Those slaves were eager to aid the Union cause as laborers or in any way by which they could be helpful to the Union army and to the Government. Thousands of them were anxious to enlist as soldiers and fight for the Union even against their former masters. How to deal with these loyal people was a problem of constantly increasing magnitude and importance, and as the war continued adherence to President Lincoln's purpose not to interfere with slavery became more and more difficult for all who were connected with the Government.

During autumn months of 1861, the Government, while not embarrassed by any attempts at military emancipation, was compelled to take action permitting the loyal slaves of disloyal masters to aid in efforts to save the nation. In the regions where the colored people were the most numerous and the climate was the most inhospitable to the Union soldiers, the demand for such action was most imperative. As time passed the Government was led increasingly to utilize the slaves to the greatest possible extent in overcoming the rebellion. The first very important movement toward that policy was when arrangements were being made for the expeditions under General Sherman into South Carolina, where the colored population was in preponderance. On the 14th of October, 1861, in his instructions to General Sherman, the Secretary of War said among other things: "You will, however, in general, avail yourself of the services of any persons, whether fugitives from labor or not, who may offer themselves to the national Government. You may employ such persons in such services as they may be fitted for, either as ordinary employees, or, if special circumstances seem to require it, in any other capacity, with such organization in squads, companies or otherwise, as you may deem most beneficial to the service. This, however, not to mean a general arming of them for military service." This last sentence was interlined by President Lincoln by his own hand. In the phrase "special circumstances" the word "special" was also added by the President. In making these amendments to the instructions sent to General Sherman by the Secretary of War, President Lincoln was seeking to avoid harmful criticisms from those who were ever ready to embarrass the Government by stirring up race prejudice and by opposing all movements against slavery. To avoid being accused of the confiscation of the property of loyal people the order read: "You will assure all loyal masters that Congress will provide just compensation to them for the loss of the services of the persons so employed." And as an encouragement to those

who should thus serve the Government it was added: "And you will assure all persons held to involuntary labor, who may be thus received into the service of the Government, that they will, under no circumstances, be again reduced to their former condition, unless at the expiration of their respective terms of service they freely choose to return to the service of their former masters."<sup>6</sup>

This order marks the beginning of the enrollment of former slaves in the service of the Government, which was continued in force until there were enrolled two hundred and fifty thousand colored soldiers and laborers in the army. At the time this order was made President Lincoln had not reached the point at which he was willing to approve of the general enlistment in the Union army of former colored slaves, but he consented to this order because of the peculiar conditions in the section which the expedition under General Sherman was expected to occupy. The purpose to safeguard slavery against improper interference by the general Government which caused President Lincoln to disapprove of General Fremont's emancipation movement was still dominant in his mind and caused him to exercise constant supervision over his subordinates in military and civil services; and when preparing to submit to Congress in December, 1861, his annual message and the reports of the members of his Cabinet, he was astonished to discover that the annual report of the Secretary of War had been printed in pamphlet form without having been submitted to him, and had been sent by mail to the postmasters of the principal cities to be held by them in readiness to be given to the newspapers as soon as the President's message was read in the two houses of Congress.

The President's surprise at this unusual and irregular proceeding grew into displeasure when he discovered that said report contained recommendations for the general enlistment in the Union Army of colored slaves, and their employment in military activities. This was so widely at variance with the

<sup>6</sup> War Records, Vol. VI., p. 176.

position of the President at that time that the pamphlet copies of the report which had been sent out were, by telegraph, immediately ordered to be returned and the report was changed so as to conform with the views of Mr. Lincoln.

This affair was well calculated to cause a serious rupture in the President's Cabinet; the course pursued by the Secretary of War being not only at variance with the rules and customs in such cases, but of such a character as to produce the impression that it was an effort to circumvent the President by committing his administration to a policy of which he was known to disapprove.

It was claimed at the time that the report was printed without the President's approval because of the apprehension that he would not approve of the recommendation respecting the enlistment of colored troops, and that it was distributed to the newspapers as it was to make difficult if not impossible its recall. The high standing of Secretary Simon Cameron, who was responsible for this unusual proceeding, added to the embarrassment of President Lincoln and to the difficulties encountered by him in his efforts so to adjust matters as to avoid serious results. General Cameron was by ten years President Lincoln's senior. He had been twice elected to the United States senate from Pennsylvania and had for eight years served in that body with marked distinction. In the Chicago convention that nominated Mr. Lincoln he was a prominent candidate for the Presidency and was the unanimous choice of the Pennsylvania delegation for that office, and when the opportune time arrived he approved of the action by which his support in that convention was given to Mr. Lincoln, and made possible his nomination. He was a man of very superior ability, of strong personality, with a large and enthusiastic following. His pronounced antislavery convictions and tendencies caused him to be very closely allied with Seward and Chase, the two most prominent and influential members of the Lincoln Cabinet, and there is ample evidence that those three distinguished Cabinet ministers were

in frequent consultation concerning the feature of General Cameron's report to which the President objected.

The situation was made more complicated by the manifest reasonableness of the position assumed by General Cameron and the preponderance of loyal public sentiment in approval of his recommendation. Few men in Mr. Lincoln's position and with his limited experience in public life could have measured up to the requirements of that hour. But Mr. Lincoln was more than equal to the emergency. He remained calm through all of the affair. The storm, though severe, did not disturb the deep waters of his nature and his unyielding firmness held him to his declared purposes.

My personal recollections of those events are still very vivid. The people did not know of the affair until the difficulties were adjusted, but were soon given the full text of the portion of General Cameron's reports to which the President objected as well as the portion written to conform to the President's wishes.

This incident was for a time very disturbing in official circles at Washington. It was generally supposed that it would cause the dismissal of Cameron from the Cabinet and possibly the withdrawal of other members from the President's official family. It is quite certain that General Cameron expected to be requested by the President to resign as Secretary of War. But Mr. Lincoln disappointed all expectations by not manifesting the least resentment of the indignity nor any displeasure with General Cameron. His official relations with him were not in the least affected, and after a few weeks, when General Cameron had expressed a preference for a position in foreign service, he was appointed and confirmed as minister to Russia, and Edwin M. Stanton was chosen to succeed him as Secretary of War. General Cameron continued as one of President Lincoln's most devoted and faithful friends and was one of the earliest and most ardent advocates of his re-election. By his magnanimous treatment of General Cameron and the appointment of Mr. Stanton as his successor,

in the Cabinet, President Lincoln converted the disintegrating influences of the Cameron affair into elements of strength, binding the members of his administration more closely to each other and to himself.

The first regular session of Congress after President Lincoln's inauguration convened on the 2nd of December, 1861. Mr. Lincoln's nine months of experience as President had to some degree modified his position respecting slavery, but conscious that the trend of events was in the direction of relentless warfare against that institution he sounded a note of warning in his first regular message by saying: "The Union must be preserved and hence all indispensable means must be employed. We should not be in haste to determine that radical and extreme measures which may reach the loyal as well as the disloyal are indispensable."<sup>7</sup>

In each of the two sentences here quoted the word "indispensable" is used, indicating that Mr. Lincoln was anticipating the coming of conditions that would make it necessary to destroy slavery in order to save the nation. But he could not regard himself as absolved from the meaning of his oath of office and from his solemn promises not to interfere with slavery within state limits until he became fully convinced that by no other method could the nation be saved. Hence, the use of the word "indispensable" in his first regular message to Congress and in other papers before and after that event. But President Lincoln's conscientious scruples about interfering with slavery were not shared by all of those to whom that message was addressed. That Congress was made up largely of men fresh from the people and the loyal masses were becoming restless under the policy of safeguarding and protecting the institution which was seeking to destroy the nation. Hence, no counsel, not even from the President, could avail to arrest the movement against slavery. That movement was rapidly gaining in momentum, and the results of the war, whether favorable or otherwise, added to the num-

<sup>7</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., p. 52.

ber and strength of the influences that were combining against the institution that all loyal people regarded as responsible for the war.

President Lincoln, in his great anxiety to hold the border states in loyalty to the Union, earnestly advised moderation in all measures relating to slavery. But the radical element in Congress was intent on advance in antislavery legislation, and before the close of that first regular session of the thirty-seventh Congress, five important measures respecting slavery were enacted and were given the President's approval.

The first and most important of those enactments was the law abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. The history of that measure cannot be correctly written without taking account of facts which are not matters of public record, such as the action of committees, conferences with the President and with members of his Cabinet, and the work of sub-committees.

The movement enlisted the efforts of a large number of the most prominent members of both branches of Congress, some of whom, though active and influential in securing its enactment, had no part in preparing the measure which became a law. Several members of Congress introduced bills upon that subject and if one considers the published official records only there is danger of failing correctly to determine the origin of the bill which was enacted. The complete official record of the proceedings that resulted in placing that important law upon the nation's statute books and the testimony of participants in those proceedings show that the law is not identical with any one of the bills introduced by individual members, but is a composite made up of portions of several bills, together with amendments made by committees and by action of Congress.

The bill introduced early in the session by Hon. James M. Ashley of Ohio consisted of only one sentence of twenty words, and provided "that slavery, or involuntary servitude, shall cease in the District of Columbia from and after the

passage of this act." The history of this brief bill can be fully traced through all the proceedings that followed to the enactment of the law, because its author was identified with those proceedings more fully than was any senator or other member of the House of Representatives. That bill was referred to the committee for the District of Columbia, of which its author, General Ashley, was a member, and of which the Hon. Roscoe Conkling was chairman. In the routine of business the bill when read to the committee was by common consent referred to General Ashley, who, because he had introduced the measure and had it at the time in charge, at once became the target for many indignities from pro-slavery members of the committee and slave-owning residents of the District. Soon after the bill was thus referred to him as a committee of one, General Ashley was invited by Hon. Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, to a conference, during which the latter asked that the bill be amended so as to provide for compensation to loyal slave owners for slaves made free by its enactment. This was a remarkable suggestion, coming as it did from a man who at that time and during the remainder of Mr. Lincoln's administration was considered the leader of the extreme antislavery element in the republican party. But Mr. Chase knew that the President was contemplating an effort to enlist the border states in a scheme for gradual emancipation with compensation by the Government for losses thus sustained. Therefore, it was his conviction that the President would object to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia unless provision was made for compensation. To this General Ashley was at first strongly opposed, but after a prolonged interview with the President, he came to look upon the suggestion of Mr. Chase as a possible means of securing for the bill some support it might not otherwise have received. At President Lincoln's suggestion General Ashley decided to ask the Senate Committee for the District of Columbia to assign one of its members to confer with him and aid in the preparation of a bill that would be acceptable to

the President. Fortunately, Senator Lot M. Morrill of Maine was appointed as General Ashley's associate and after repeated and prolonged conferences extending over a period of several weeks, those two gentlemen came to agreement on a bill which, after being approved by President Lincoln and Mr. Chase and by the committees of the two Houses of Congress, was, on the 12th day of March, 1862, reported to the House of Representatives by General Ashley with the recommendation of the committee that it be passed. Along with a like recommendation from the Senate committee for the District of Columbia, the bill was reported to the senate by Senator Morrill, and after extended discussion and amendment, on the 3rd of April, 1862, it was passed by a vote of twenty-nine for to fourteen against. On the 11th of April the bill as amended by the senate passed the House by a vote of ninety-two for to thirty-eight against, and was approved by the President and became a law on the 16th of April, 1862.

The law abolished slavery in the District of Columbia and appropriated one million dollars to compensate loyal slave owners for their slaves at the rate of three hundred dollars for each slave made free by that law, and also appropriated one hundred thousand dollars for expenses of voluntary emigration to Hayti or Liberia. General Ashley's objection to the compensation feature of this bill, already mentioned, was on account of his disapproval of such a recognition by the Government of the slave holder's ownership of their slaves, and also because he believed that three-fourths of those who would receive compensation were secessionists at heart and in sympathy with the Rebellion. Many other radical antislavery members were of the same opinion, but all submitted to that objectionable feature of the bill because of their ardent desire to banish slavery from the national capital and from the District in which it was located. President Lincoln, however, was in favor of compensating all loyal slave owners for slaves made free by action of the Government and providing for the cost of voluntary colonization, and he was delighted to have

both of these features included in the law making the District of Columbia free. Of the other four antislavery measures adopted during that session of Congress the most important was the law prohibiting slavery from the territories of the United States and from all territory that for any purpose or at any time might be acquired by the nation. The enactment by Congress of that law was peculiarly pleasing to Mr. Lincoln, as it was in the line of the teachings to which he has devoted so many years. The fundamental doctrine of the republican party was that "The Constitution confers upon Congress sovereign power over the territories for their government," and that in the exercise of that power Congress should prohibit slavery in the territories of the United States. The great speeches which made Abraham Lincoln famous and won for him the Presidency were all in defense of that doctrine, and he was never more eloquent and forceful than when insisting that not one foot of free soil should ever be contaminated by slavery. And when it became his privilege, by his signature, to make valid an enactment embodying the teachings of all his life, the foundation principle of his party and the requirements of civic righteousness, he had reached a height of personal achievement above which very few have ever risen. And in the enactment of that law the long, hard struggle against oppression found a rich reward. Since the glad day in which that law became effective not one inch of free territory in all of our national domain has ever felt the tread of the heel of tyranny.

Quite as gratifying to all loyal people as the law granting freedom to the slaves of the disloyal was that other law providing for the enlistment of colored freedmen as soldiers in the Union army. No one act of the Government, save the edict of the Emancipation, wrought as effectively as did that law in the final overthrow of the Rebellion. The measure of Congress which afforded the human heart greatest relief and gratification was the additional article of war prohibiting the arrest of the fugitive slaves by any officer or person in the

military or naval service. Apart from slavery itself the most objectionable feature of the reign of slavery was the Fugitive Slave Law, by which the freedom-loving people of the free states were required to pursue, capture and return to slavery fugitives from bondage who were fleeing to a land of liberty, and that article of war marked the end of that unspeakably offensive Fugitive Slave Law.

These five antislavery laws enacted during that first regular session of the thirty-seventh Congress, together with the Confiscation Law passed during the special session, marked the great advance being made in the direction of the extinction of slavery. During the time these measures were under consideration in Congress, President Lincoln was earnestly engaged in efforts to persuade the Border States to adopt a system of emancipation with compensation by the Government for their slaves thus made free. His pleadings were pathetic, but were all unavailing. His efforts, however, were helpful to the enactment of the antislavery laws before recited and aided in creating the conditions which brought forth the great edict of Emancipation. The trend of events was evidently in the direction of a declaration against slavery, but before conditions, in President Lincoln's estimation, seemed to demand such action he was unexpectedly required by his convictions of duty again to interpose his authority and overrule a movement against slavery by one of his subordinates.

On the 9th of May, 1862, General David Hunter, in command of the department of the South, issued an order of military emancipation which on the 19th of May President Lincoln in a proclamation declared to be without authority from the General Government and therefore void. No improper motives could by any one be ascribed to General Hunter for his action in this matter. He was an officer of exceptional ability with no political aspirations or tendencies, and was a devoted personal and political friend of Mr. Lincoln. His department included the states of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, having a population which normally

consisted of from three to five slaves to one white person. The whites were secessionists and had all fled upon the approach of the Union army. The colored people were all loyal and were eager to aid the Government as laborers or as soldiers in the army, for which they were at the time organizing. The order of the Secretary of War to General Sherman hereinbefore mentioned and the laws enacted by Congress, which was then in session, together with conditions in his department, seemed to General Hunter to justify his proclamation of freedom for the slaves.

But the issuing of that proclamation by General Hunter was an exercise of authority that President Lincoln regarded as the prerogative of the Chief Executive only, and upon that ground the proclamation was overruled. Secretary Chase in a letter to the President asked him to permit the order to stand, but Mr. Lincoln was clear in his conviction that he could not rightfully do so. Therefore, on the proclamation he wrote, as he also stated in his letter to Chase, "No commanding general should do such a thing upon my responsibility without consulting me."<sup>8</sup>

In his proclamation of May 19th, 1862, annulling the emancipation portion of General Hunter's order, President Lincoln said: "I further make known that, whether it be competent for me, as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, to declare the slaves of any State or States free, and whether, at any time, in any case, it shall have become a necessity indispensable to the maintenance of the Government to exercise such supposed power, are questions which, under my responsibility, I reserve to myself, and which I cannot feel justified in leaving to the decision of commanders in the field. These are totally different questions from those of police regulations in armies and camps."<sup>9</sup>

By comparing these quotations from the President's proc-

<sup>8</sup> Warden's "Life of Salmon P. Chase," p. 434. Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., p. 167.

<sup>9</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., pp. 171-172.

clamation with his statements nine months before when disapproving of General Fremont's emancipation scheme, we discover a very great change in his attitude toward slavery. In this proclamation by the President there is no disapproval of emancipation nor any reference to its possible unfavorable influence in the states permitting slavery. The only objection to General Hunter's order which is here stated is based on the General's lack of authority to take such action without consulting the President. But very significant is the intimation in this proclamation of the possibility of a future emancipation policy by the President himself. As I now read those hints of such possible action by the President, I am astonished that they were not understood by the people at that time. We had come to look upon Mr. Lincoln as unyieldingly opposed to all avoidable interference with slavery within state limits, and we were not looking for any movement by him against that institution. Therefore, we did not then discover that in overruling General Hunter's proclamation because it was issued without due authority, the President encouraged the hope that at an early day he would turn the batteries of the Government upon slavery. It was doubtless to prepare the public mind for such an event that Mr. Lincoln in this proclamation stated that he reserved to himself the exclusive right to issue an emancipation proclamation, to decide whether such action could rightfully be taken and when it could wisely be done. For a like purpose, President Lincoln in his annual message in December stated that "all indispensable means must be employed" to save the Union. He was feeling the pressure of the antislavery sentiment of the loyal people and was educating the public mind to regard emancipation as indispensable to the preservation of the nation. As President Lincoln saw the coming of emancipation he also saw the utter financial ruin that it would bring upon the portions of the country where it should be made effective. And with all his heart and soul he desired and endeavored to rescue those sections from that calamity by having the General Government

compensate slave owners for their financial loss through emancipation. As an object lesson teaching the effectiveness of such a plan he secured compensation in connection with the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. On the 6th of March, 1862, while that District bill was under consideration in Congress, the President by special message asked for the adoption of the following joint resolution: "Resolved, That the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt gradual abolishment of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State, in its discretion, to compensate for the inconvenience, public and private, produced by such change of system."<sup>10</sup>

This resolution was quoted by President Lincoln in his proclamation overruling General Hunter's emancipation proclamation. So dominant in his soul was the desire by compensation to save the South from the ruinous results of the destruction of slavery which he had come to regard as inevitable, that he turned aside from the main purpose of his proclamation to advocate his favorite proposition of "compensate abolishment" of that institution. Respecting the foregoing joint resolution Mr. Lincoln said: "The resolution, in the language above quoted, was adopted by large majorities in both branches of Congress, and now stands an authentic, definite, and solemn proposal of the nation to the states and people most immediately interested in the subject matter. To the people of those states I now earnestly appeal. I do not argue—I beseech you to make arguments for yourselves. You cannot, if you would, be blind to the signs of the times. I beg of you a calm and enlarged consideration of them, ranging, if it may be, far above personal and partisan politics. This proposal makes common cause for a common object, casting no reproaches upon any. It acts not the Pharisee. The change it contemplates would come gently as the dews of heaven, not rending or wrecking anything. Will you not embrace it? So much good has not been done, by one effort,

<sup>10</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., p. 172.

in all past time, as in the providence of God it is now your high privilege to do. May the vast future not have to lament that you have neglected it.”<sup>11</sup>

Early in the war Mr. Lincoln in a private conversation with Robert J. Walker and James R. Gilmore intimated that he was considering a proposition to offer financial compensation to slave states that would co-operate with the General Government in accomplishing the gradual abolishment of slavery. He then expressed the conviction that the North and South were jointly and equally responsible for the existence of slavery in the nation, and that any financial loss from its abolishment should be borne by the General Government. To this conviction he steadfastly adhered, even after Congress had submitted to the states the Constitutional Amendment abolishing and forever prohibiting slavery in the nation; but that compensation for financial loss through emancipation was for states co-operating with the Government in abolishing slavery, and in conversation with Governor Walker he said: “If we must fight out this war to a victory there should be no compensation.”

And when dealing with the Hunter proclamation Mr. Lincoln realized that slavery was doomed and that only by the plan suggested in his gradual emancipation message of March 6th could any state permitting slavery escape from disastrous financial loss. Hence, his impassioned appeal to the slave states to accept the compensated abolishment proposition which he quoted in the proclamation annulling General Hunter's order. Hence, also, his conference on the 12th of July, 1862, with members of Congress from the Border States and his strong appeal to them not to neglect the opportunity afforded them to aid in the early termination of the war and to save their states from the disastrous financial loss by commending to their constituents the compensation proposition of the General Government.

At the time of that conference with the representatives

<sup>11</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., pp. 172-173.

of the Border States, President Lincoln had not only decided to issue an Emancipation Proclamation, but the original copy of that great document had been prepared by him and was probably lying in his private drawer within his reach as he was reading to those gentlemen his fervent plea for their assistance in making his compensation abolishment plan successful.

This fact explains the peculiar character of his appeal on the 12th of July to those members of Congress from the Border States. His marshaling of facts, cogency of argument, solemn warnings and impassioned appeal resemble the tearful messages of Jeremiah, when in prophetic vision he saw the calamities into which his people were stubbornly advancing. To have pointed those men to the sword of judgment against slavery which even then was lifted up and was ready to fall, would have been to employ a threat to accomplish what he still hoped to achieve by persuasion. In the Hodges letter, from which I have already quoted, referring to his efforts with the Border State men, President Lincoln said: "When in March and May and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the Border States to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition, and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the Constitution, or of laying strong hand upon the colored element."<sup>12</sup>

On the 7th of April, 1864, three days after the Hodges letter was written, in a conversation with Mr. George Thompson, Mr. Lincoln, referring to the time of which I am writing, said: "The moment came when I felt that slavery must die that the nation might live."

That interview with the Border State men on the 12th of July, 1862, was the last of Mr. Lincoln's efforts to avoid or postpone the issuing of a proclamation of freedom. If

<sup>12</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 67.

those gentlemen upon that occasion had encouraged the President to hope that they would aid in making his compensation scheme successful it is quite certain that he would have withheld his proclamation until they could have done so; but by declining his invitation they left him without an alternative, and the next day in a conversation with Seward and Welles he declared his purpose to issue an Emancipation Proclamation.

## VII

### EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

THE Emancipation Proclamation was the product of a severe struggle between the radical and conservative elements of the nation. That struggle continued with constantly increasing vigor during the first year and a half of Mr. Lincoln's Presidency, and ceased when that Proclamation was issued on the 22nd of September, 1862. After that date the conservative element with decreased and decreasing severity opposed the Emancipation policy of the administration, but the victory of the radicals was practically won when the preliminary proclamation was issued.

President Lincoln became the unwilling captive of the radical element, and with very great and painful reluctance accomplished by the Emancipation Proclamation what he diligently sought to avoid. He ardently desired the abolishment of slavery by state action and not by edict of the General Government. After the preliminary Proclamation was issued he stated to Hon. Edwin Stanley, Military Governor of North Carolina, "that he had prayed to the Almighty to save him from this necessity, adopting the very language of our Saviour, 'If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,' but the prayer had not been answered."<sup>1</sup>

To the representatives from the Border States, on July 12th, 1862, the President said: "I am pressed with a difficulty not yet mentioned—one which threatens division among those who, united, are none too strong." In this President Lincoln referred to the Proclamation of Emancipation which had been issued by General Hunter, and said: "In repudiating it, I gave dissatisfaction, if not offense, to many whose support the

<sup>1</sup> Thorndyke Rice, *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 533.

country cannot afford to lose. And this is not the end of it. The pressure in this direction is still upon me and is increasing."<sup>2</sup>

The next day after that conference, in his conversation with Secretaries Seward and Welles, according to the testimony of the latter, Mr. Lincoln declared that Emancipation "was forced upon him as a necessity," "was thrust at him from various quarters," and "had been driven home to him by the conference of the preceding day."

The conference to which President Lincoln here refers was the one with the Border State men, and it was their rejection of his proposition for compensated emancipation that had "driven home to him" the necessity of an Emancipation Proclamation. He realized that a crisis had been reached and that what he designated as "Military Emancipation" had become an indispensable necessity. The struggle by which that decision was evolved began when he became President. The Fremont Emancipation movement was an eruption from the volcano of antislavery sentiment among the loyal masses and the contest which that movement precipitated added to the influences arrayed in hostility to slavery. On the 15th of November, 1861, eight months after Mr. Lincoln's inauguration, Hon. George Bancroft addressed a letter to the President in which he said:

"Your administration has fallen upon times which will be remembered as long as human events find a record. I sincerely wish to you the glory of perfect success. Civil war is the instrument of Divine Providence to root out social slavery. Posterity will not be satisfied with the result unless the consequences of the war shall effect an increase of free States. This is the universal expectation and hope of men of all parties."

In reply to Mr. Bancroft's letter the President wrote: "The main thought in the closing paragraph of your letter is one which does not escape my attention, and with which I

<sup>2</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., pp. 272-273.

must deal in all due caution, and with the best judgment I can bring to it.”<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Bancroft's high standing in public esteem, his great wisdom and discretion and his large experience in public life, gave much weight to his declaration respecting slavery, and Mr. Lincoln's reply to that portion of his letter is a milestone marking his progress toward the conclusion announced by him eight months later in his conversation with two members of his Cabinet, as already cited.

During the months immediately preceding Emancipation Mr. Lincoln's mail was loaded with letters similar to the one received by him from Mr. Bancroft. Many conservative people of prominence in business activities and professional pursuits very earnestly counselled the President as did Mr. Bancroft, not to delay but to hasten the execution of the edict of destiny against slavery. People distinguished for their moderation and for their affiliation with conservative organizations and movements were emphatic in their declarations to the President, by letters and otherwise, that slavery should not be permitted to survive the war it had brought upon the nation. Leading democrats like Hon. Robert J. Walker of Mississippi and Gen. Benjamin F. Butler of Massachusetts assured the President of their conviction that, as slavery had drawn the sword it should speedily perish by the sword. People of strong antislavery views were earnest and untiring in their demands that slavery should be slain that it might not slay the nation. All these insisted that as slavery was the Rebellion's main pillar of strength it should be destroyed as a means for suppressing the Rebellion. They would not permit the President nor the loyal people to forget, that shortly before the war Representative Ashmore of South Carolina had declared in Congress that “the South can sustain more men in the field than the North can. Here four millions of slaves alone will enable her to support an army of half a million.”

<sup>3</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., pp. 20-21.

Similar declarations were made by other prominent Southern men, and the Southern disloyal press teemed with editorials and contributed articles calling attention to the great advantage to the South of having such a vast force of toiling men and women to conduct agricultural and other activities of the South while the white men were at the front fighting against the Union armies.

The sentiments of the loyal people who remembered these boasts were faithfully represented by the declaration of Governor Andrew of Massachusetts to the President in May, 1862, when he said: "The people of Massachusetts have come to feel it a heavy draft on their patriotism to be asked to fight Rebels without being permitted to fire on their magazines."

In a like vein, but with greater bitterness, Horace Greeley said: "On the face of this wide earth, Mr. President, there is not one disinterested, determined, intelligent champion of the Union cause who does not feel that all attempts to put down the Rebellion and at the same time uphold its inciting cause are preposterous and futile."

While declarations favorable to emancipation were pouring in upon President Lincoln by letters, newspaper articles and interviewers, church gatherings and reform associations were passing strong antislavery resolutions and sending delegations to the White House to declare their loyalty to the Union and to plead for the overthrow of slavery. No delegations from church bodies or from organizations engaged in reform work during those months of agitation and strife asked that slavery be left undisturbed, but all espoused the cause of emancipation. Many loyal people, however, feared that any interference with slavery by the General Government would be harmful to the Union cause and all who were pro-slavery at heart were watchful and vigilant in "safeguarding the peculiar institution." On the 13th of September, 1862, in addressing a delegation from the religious bodies of Chicago, President Lincoln said: "I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and that by religious men who are equally

certain that they represent the divine will. . . . The subject is difficult and good men do not agree. . . . You know also that the last session of Congress had a decided majority of antislavery men, yet they could not unite upon this policy. The same is true of the religious people.”<sup>4</sup>

The struggles between those contending forces were constant and at times very severe; but as resistlessly as the coming of the day the antislavery movement advanced. Mr. Lincoln recognized the growth of public sentiment in favor of emancipation and realized that he was rapidly approaching the time when he would be compelled by his own sense of duty to proclaim freedom to the slaves. A few days before the Emancipation Proclamation was issued in an interview with Rev. William Henry Channing and M. D. Conway he said: “Perhaps we may be better able to do something in that direction after awhile than we are now. . . . I think the country is growing in this direction daily and I am not without hope that something of the desire of you and your friends may be accomplished. When the hour comes for dealing with slavery I trust I shall be willing to do my duty though it costs my life.”

While the growth of public sentiment against slavery, to which in the foregoing interview President Lincoln referred, was being accomplished, there were going on in his own mind and heart some very remarkable changes of conviction and purpose. In his letter to Senator Browning, at the time of the Fremont Emancipation movement, already cited, Mr. Lincoln said: “Can it be pretended that it is any longer the Government of the United States—any government of constitution and law—where any general or a President may make permanent rules of property by proclamation? I do not say Congress might not, with propriety, pass a law on the point, just such as General Fremont proclaimed. I do not say I might not as I may have Congress vote for it. What I object to is that I, as President, shall expressly or

<sup>4</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., pp. 28-29.

impliedly, seize the permanent legislative functions of the government.”<sup>5</sup>

This cannot mean less than a declaration that he did not regard himself as clothed with authority to issue an edict of freedom for those in slavery under the laws of a state.

Thirteen months later, on the 9th of May, 1862, in overruling General Hunter's emancipation edict, the President intimated that he might reach the conclusion that he had the right to issue such a proclamation of freedom.

And only four months after that intimation in his reply to the previously mentioned delegation from Chicago, on the 13th of September, 1862, he stated his conviction relative to that matter in the following unequivocal declaration: “I raise no objection against it on legal or constitutional grounds, for as commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy, in time of war, I suppose I have a right to take any measures which may best subdue the enemy.”<sup>6</sup>

These quotations are sufficient to show the changes that were taking place in President Lincoln's mind, but they do not disclose the more important changes that were taking place in his intentions. To no person, not even to his closest and most intimate friends, did he during those eighteen months give a hint of any change in his purposes relative to emancipation. And it was his habit when conferring with persons upon matters of importance to argue against a decision he already had made and a course he intended to pursue. He did this not only to conceal his intentions, when he regarded it necessary to do so, but also and chiefly to draw from others their strongest arguments in favor of the purposes he had formed. Hence, it is matter of authentic record that the strongest arguments against emancipation were those made by the President after the Emancipation Proclamation was written and had been submitted to the Cabinet for consideration. It seemed necessary for him to pursue this course

<sup>5</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Vol. IV., p. 422.

<sup>6</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., pp. 31-32.

with individuals, committees and delegations which were urging him to adopt and pursue an antislavery policy, but it caused him to be unfortunately misunderstood by many of his true friends during the time he was waiting for such a policy to become "an indispensable necessity." And it also produced the bewildering disagreement found in published statements of the order of events connected with the preparation and issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

In "Six Months in the White House," Mr. F. B. Carpenter, the artist who painted the historic picture of Lincoln and his Cabinet, publishes his recollections of President Lincoln's account to him of the preparation of the Emancipation Proclamation and its consideration by the Cabinet. That portion of Mr. Carpenter's book has been reproduced verbatim by many authors of works on Lincoln, and has been made the basis by other authors for their histories of those events. But Mr. Carpenter's errors in dates, which have thus been given wide publicity, are all corrected by official records, by diaries kept by Secretaries Chase and Welles of the President's Cabinet, and by persons closely associated with the President. By careful and extended examination of those public and personal records I am able here to present an absolutely correct history of that proclamation from the time it was first written by Mr. Lincoln until it was finally published as an edict of the Government.

On Wednesday, July 9th, 1862, according to the President's own statements, while on the steamer returning to Washington from his inspection of the army under General McClellan at Harrison's Landing, he wrote the first rough draft of the Emancipation Proclamation.<sup>7</sup>

Thursday, July 10th, President Lincoln invited his pastor, Rev. P. D. Gurley, D.D., to be the first to learn of his decision to issue an Emancipation Proclamation, and also to afford him the aid of his ability and learning in the preparation of that document. After this conference with his pastor, the rough

<sup>7</sup> Abraham Lincoln and His Presidency, Vol. II., p. 112.

draft was carefully rewritten by Mr. Lincoln and included four valuable changes suggested by Dr. Gurley.

Friday, July 11th, the President invited Vice-President Hamlin to spend a night with him at the Soldiers' Home for a conference, as he said, "about an important matter." After dinner the President said, "Hamlin, you have often urged me to issue an Emancipation Proclamation, and as I have decided to do so, I have asked you to be the first one to see the document and to confer with me about it." This of course refers to the copy of the proclamation the President prepared after his consultation with Dr. Gurley. Mr. Hamlin heartily approved of the proposition and suggested three changes in the phraseology, two of which Mr. Lincoln accepted. After that evening, as far as known, the proclamation was not again seen save by the President, until it was presented to the Cabinet for their consideration.

Saturday, July 12th, President Lincoln held the repeatedly mentioned conference with the Border States representatives. During that conference he made no reference to the forthcoming announcement of emancipation, but very strongly urged the approval of his compensation policy in view of the manifest trend of affairs in regard to slavery.

Sunday, July 13th, while on the way to attend the funeral of Secretary Stanton's child, President Lincoln informed Secretaries Seward and Welles that he intended to issue an Emancipation Proclamation. Upon no previous occasion had Mr. Lincoln intimated to any member of his Cabinet that he was contemplating any such action. Secretary Welles, in his diary, in a somewhat extended account of the affair, says: "It was a new departure for the President, for until this time in all our previous interviews, whenever the question of emancipation or the mitigation of slavery had been in any way alluded to he had been prompt and emphatic in denouncing any interference by the General Government with the subject."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Diary of Gideon Welles, Vol. II., pp. 70-71.

Mr. Lincoln was greatly depressed while making this disclosure and explaining the processes by which he had reached the conclusion to take this important step. He had come in from the Soldiers' Home to attend the funeral and had invited the two secretaries to accompany him. His long-time, devoted friend, Judge Henry C. Whitney, was in the entrance-hall of the White House when the President came down the stairs to take the carriage standing at the door. Judge Whitney states that Seward, whom he could see sitting in the carriage, "looked at peace with himself and all mankind . . . and appeared perfectly easy and contented." Of Mr. Lincoln's appearance Judge Whitney says: "Oh! how haggard and dejected he looked. I had not seen him for nine months and the change was frightful to behold. . . . Lincoln spoke to me and shook hands quite mechanically—he was absent-minded, he did not know me at all—he was oblivious of my presence or of any one's presence. . . . I knew from the disaster painted on Lincoln's face that some bad news was in the air."<sup>9</sup>

The "bad news" that chiselled agitation on the kindly face of Mr. Lincoln that day was not the destructive raids General Morgan was then making in Kentucky and adjoining states. Disturbing as these were, something far worse was on that 13th of July crushing the heart of the great and good Chief Magistrate. On the preceding day he had failed in his effort by compensation to save the South from the financial ruin of the policy he had decided to pursue for the saving of the nation. It was that failure and its far-reaching consequences, as foreseen by him, that shrouded his soul in gloom on that memorable Sabbath morning.

President Lincoln's statement to Mr. Hamlin on the preceding Friday evening and his statement to Seward and Welles on that Sunday morning, when fully understood, are in full accord with his statements to Mr. Carpenter, the artist, that the proclamation was prepared without consultation with

<sup>9</sup> On the Circuit with Lincoln, p. 566.

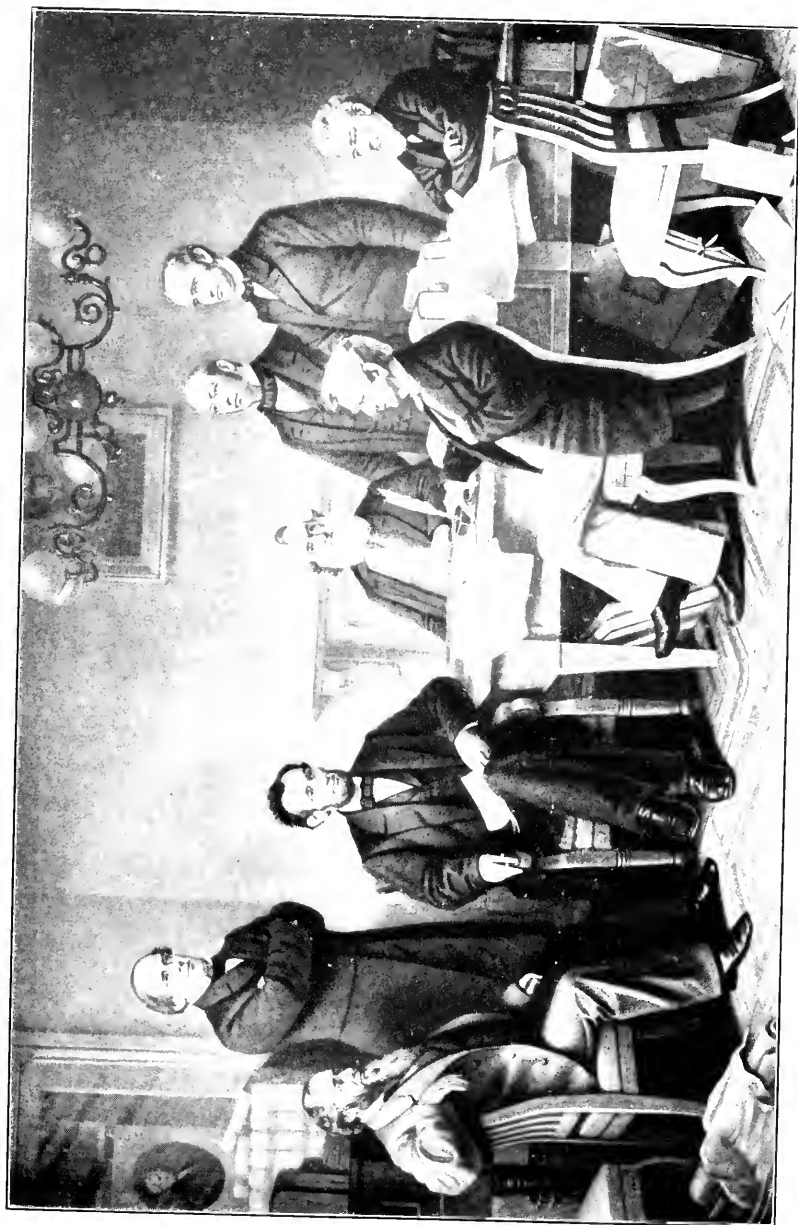
any member of his Cabinet, for it was fully prepared before that conference with Seward and Welles.

July 14th President Lincoln sent to Congress a message asking for the enactment of a law providing for financial compensation to states that would adopt gradual emancipation.

July 22nd the Emancipation Proclamation was for the first time presented to the Cabinet. All the members of that body were present, and after extended discussion, President Lincoln, upon the suggestion of Secretary Seward, withdrew the document to be again presented when conditions in the field were more favorable to the Union cause. During the weeks that followed the proposition was held in absolute confidence by every member of the Cabinet. It was the year for the election of members of Congress, and political campaigns were being prosecuted during those weeks with very great vigor. I was every day, at that time, engaged in political work and was closely associated with leaders of the Union party, and not one of my associates or acquaintances had the slightest intimation that the President had any thought of issuing an Emancipation Proclamation. Important as was the measure and widespread and deep as was public interest in the subject, there was no "leak" from any member of the President's official family, nor from any one who had been consulted relative to the matter.

It is interesting to think of that proclamation being held by President Lincoln during those weeks of battles at the front and struggles in the political arena, in constant readiness to be thrown with resistless force at the most vulnerable point of the Rebellion when the favorable moment should arrive. In his history of those weeks in July and August, given Mr. Carpenter, the artist, President Lincoln says: "I put the draft of the Proclamation aside, as you do your sketch for a picture, waiting for a victory. From time to time I added or changed a line, touching it up here and there, anxiously awaiting the progress of events."

The proclamation that had been considered by the Cabinet



PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND HIS CABINET

From the famous painting made at the White House by F. B. Carpenter.



that day in July was not all laid aside as this statement by Mr. Lincoln seems to indicate. The first portion of that document related to a confiscation act which had been passed by Congress a few days before, and three days later (on July 25th) it was issued as a separate proclamation by the President. The second portion of the paper considered that day by the Cabinet was a declaration by the President of his purpose to ask Congress to enact a law providing for compensation to states abolishing slavery, and the third and last portion was the Proclamation of Emancipation. That proclamation with the preceding section in relation to the President's purpose was laid aside and amended from time to time as stated by President Lincoln to Mr. Carpenter.

It was at this meeting of the Cabinet that Secretary Seward suggested an amendment that would pledge the United States to maintain the freedom of those who should be emancipated by the proclamation.

Wednesday, September 17th, the battle of Antietam was fought, and not until Saturday, September 20th, was it known with certainty that the result was favorable to the Union cause. When that information reached the President at the Soldiers' Home, he immediately proceeded to the final revision of the preliminary proclamation.

Monday, September 22nd, 1862, President Lincoln came in from the Soldiers' Home to the White House, called a meeting of the Cabinet, and for the second time presented to them the Emancipation Proclamation. It was at this meeting that he also told the members of his Cabinet that he had "made a solemn vow before God" which he intended now to keep "by the declaration of freedom to the slaves"; that he did not wish their advice about the main matter, for he knew their views, as they had freely and fully expressed them when the subject was before them in July; that he had decided to issue the proclamation and would be glad to consider any suggestions they might wish to make respecting forms of expression or minor matters connected with the document.

The proclamation read by Mr. Lincoln at this meeting of his Cabinet was quite unlike the paper he submitted to them, and after consideration laid aside two months before. It had been enlarged and strengthened and made much more expressive of its high purpose, and it contained the two words suggested by Seward at the July meeting. Other amendments failed to receive the President's approval and the historical proclamation, after being signed and given the Government's official seal, was published on Tuesday morning, September 23rd, 1862.

The foregoing record shows that from July 22nd to September 22nd—exactly two months—the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was under consideration by the President and his Cabinet, with no other persons save the Vice-President and the President's pastor having any knowledge of the purpose to issue such a document. This fact gives peculiar interest to the events that transpired during those two months. Twenty-eight days after that proclamation was first submitted to the Cabinet, and by their advice temporarily laid aside, and while the President was waiting and praying for a victory that would enable him to issue it under auspicious conditions, Horace Greeley, in the *Tribune* of August 19th, published an editorial entitled, "The Prayer of Twenty Million," in which, with harsh and heartless severity, he denounced the President for not pursuing a more vigorous policy against slavery. That editorial expressed the feelings of the radical antislavery people, who were eager for just such an edict as was the proclamation the President had prepared and was anxiously waiting to announce. The harmful influence of that Greeley editorial was speedily arrested by Mr. Lincoln's reply which, though it made no disclosures of the emancipation policy soon to be adopted, effectively silenced the great editor and quieted the unrest of the reasonable people throughout the nation. There is ample reason for the belief that when Mr. Lincoln prepared that reply to Greeley he was confidently expecting an early victory of the Union Army under General

Great and Memorable Events.

It is well known that the statement found in general currency and credence, that, on the proclamation having been read to the cabinet, Secretary Chase objected to the appearance of a document of such momentous character without one word beyond the dry phrases necessary to convey its meaning, and finally proposed that there should be added to the president's draft, the sentence — 'And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the constitution, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.' The facts of the case, however, as learned by Mr. Chapman were these: While the measure was pending, Mr. Chase submitted to the president a draft of a proclamation embodying his views of the subject, and which closed with the solemn and appropriate words referred to. Mr. Lincoln adopted the sentence intact, as Mr. Chase wrote it, excepting that he inserted after the word 'constitution,' the words 'upon which necessary,' and in that form the document went to the world, and to history.

FACSIMILE OF MANUSCRIPT BY R. M. DEVENS

An exact reproduction in size and otherwise of the manuscript of "Our First Century," presented to Dr. Ervin Chapman when he subscribed for that work in 1878.



Pope, which he intended to follow with the proclamation of freedom for the slaves. That expectation seems to appear in his reply and serves to place that production among the masterpieces of epistolary literature. Instead of the victory which the President expected there came the second Bull Run disaster, which postponed the issuing of the proclamation to a later date.

Less ominous than was the Greeley editorial, but more dramatic, was the visit of the delegation from Chicago and their interview with the President on the 13th of September. Representing a large convention of evangelical churches which had been held in Chicago, that delegation of very able and learned men visited Washington to remonstrate with the President against his seeming purpose to protect and preserve slavery. The memorial they presented was claimed by them to be a revelation of the Divine Will respecting the duty of Government concerning slavery, and in language quite as strong as proper courtesy would permit, it demanded that the President issue an edict of freedom for the slaves. And while that impatient demand was being patiently listened to by the overburdened President, there lay only a few feet from the speakers, in the desk by which Mr. Lincoln was then standing, the Emancipation Proclamation which fifty-four days before he had submitted to his Cabinet and was at that moment holding in readiness to be issued as soon as there should be a victory in the field that would contribute to its good influence with the loyal people and in all the world.

In his reply to that delegation the President could not disclose conditions as they then existed with reference to his intended Emancipation policy. But with the skill of a master of men and measures he replied to his distinguished and patriotic visitors in a manner that left them all in uncertainty as to his intentions beyond the assurance which he gave that he would be obedient to Divine Will as that will was made known to him.

The majesty and might of silence were shown by Presi-

dent Lincoln's diplomatic concealment of his purposes respecting slavery from that delegation and from the watchful and anxious public. By the course he then pursued he held the people in loyalty to the nation and to its Government, and at the same time prepared the way for the wild joy that greeted the Emancipation Proclamation when it was issued only ten days later.

Less ominous than was the Greeley episode, less dramatic than was the interview with the Chicago delegation, but far more pathetic than either of those events, was the action of the Massachusetts state convention only a few days before the proclamation was issued emphatically demanding such an edict of the Government and steadily refraining from endorsing the administration of the President, who stood as it were with the proclamation in his hand anxiously waiting for favorable conditions to announce it to the world. Oh! those two tragic months from July 22nd to September 22nd, 1862. How vividly their startling events reappear before my mind as I write these personal reminiscences! As already stated, we were in all the loyal states in the midst of campaigns for the election of members of the lower branch of Congress when that Emancipation Proclamation was issued by the President and published in the newspapers of the world. To the North it was a blessed sunrise, the dawning of a new day. To the South it was a sunset ending in a dark night of faded hopes. It stimulated the enthusiasm of the antislavery element and aroused antagonism in the people of pro-slavery sentiments and tendencies. It divided the loyal forces and kindled to greater activity the forces of partisan agitation and strife. When it was under consideration in the Cabinet, Postmaster General Blair expressed his apprehension that it would be used against the administration at the coming election. To this the President—a wiser and more skillful politician than was any of his Cabinet—promptly replied: "They will use their cudgel on us any way and it will do us more harm not to issue the proclamation than to issue it."

The claim that the war was conducted to destroy slavery rather than to save the nation was given increased force by the proclamation, but this was more than offset by the immense increase of enthusiasm of the antislavery people which it produced. That enthusiasm was shared by prominent and distinguished people as well as by the loyal masses, and added largely to the interest and activity of the Congressional campaigns then in progress.

One strong antislavery member of Congress of my acquaintance, as he was driving to a railroad station from a country appointment, when informed that the proclamation had been issued, sprang from the carriage in which he was riding, threw his shining beaver hat high into the air and kicked it into worthlessness as it came down, while he shouted like a soldier at charge of bayonet. He was a candidate for re-election and was being opposed by the conservative element of the Union party in his district, who claimed that his pronounced hostility to slavery was objectionable and embarrassing to the President. This claim, which seemed likely to cause his defeat, at once lost its force and it seemed to him as if the President were standing close beside him and silently requesting the people to continue him in Congress, which they gladly did.

In some districts, however, the proclamation seemed to cause the defeat of the administration candidates; but in spite of all opposition and occasional reverses it marks the beginning of a new epoch in our history from which there has been no turning back.

When the proclamation was published the Governors of the loyal states were in convention at Altoona, Penn., and after the adjournment of that gathering, sixteen of their number, including the Governor of the new state of West Virginia, sent the President a written, strong endorsement of his Emancipation Proclamation and policy, and on the 15th of December following, the National House of Representatives by a vote of seventy-eight to fifty-one, resolved:

"That the proclamation of the President of the United States, of the date of 22nd September, 1862, is warranted by the Constitution, and that the policy of emancipation, as indicated in that proclamation, is well adapted to hasten the restoration of peace, was well chosen as a war measure, and is an exercise of power with proper regards for the rights of the States and the perpetuity of free government." <sup>10</sup>

The proclamation of which I have here been writing was not, however, the document that gave freedom to the slaves. It was only the preliminary proclamation which announced that on the first of January following it would be followed by a proclamation of freedom if those who were in rebellion did not within one hundred days return to their allegiance to the Government. That preliminary proclamation did not accomplish the emancipation of one slave, but it announced the coming of a proclamation that would emancipate millions of slaves, and it was the beginning of the emancipation policy of the administration from which there was never the least deviation by the President or by any branch or department of the national Government.

Near the close of the year 1862, President Lincoln with very great care prepared his final Emancipation Proclamation which the preliminary proclamation declared would be issued on the 1st of January, 1863, if the Rebellion was still in progress.

Tuesday, December 30th, the Cabinet convened to consider the final proclamation which was to give freedom to the slaves. This was the first and only time that document was before the Cabinet. It was at this meeting that Secretary Chase called the President's attention to the fitness of having in such an important document a suitable recognition of the Deity. This incident is not mentioned in either the Chase or Welles diaries, and statements of the affair in books and other publications either make no mention of the date when that suggestion was made by Mr. Chase, or they indicate that

<sup>10</sup> *Globe*, December 15, 1862, p. 92.

the event occurred at a prior meeting. That, however, could not have been the case, for at all meetings of the Cabinet to consider emancipation previous to the meeting of December 30th it was the preliminary proclamation that was considered and the Chase amendment was not added to the preliminary proclamation but to the final document that freed the slaves. The "Draft of the Emancipation Proclamation of January First, 1863, as submitted to the Cabinet for Final Revision December 30th, 1862," is published in full in the Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., pp. 155, 156, 157, and does not contain the Chase amendment. That amendment was written by Mr. Chase at President Lincoln's request and is as follows: "And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."<sup>11</sup>

When that amendment was read by Mr. Chase at the meeting of the Cabinet it was at once accepted in full by Mr. Lincoln, who added the three words, "upon military necessity," and made it the closing paragraph of the proclamation. And as that amendment is not in the copy of the proclamation which was considered by the Cabinet December 30th, and is in the proclamation that was issued two days later, we are assured that it must have been presented and accepted by the President at that Cabinet meeting of December 30th.

In the news items published at that time there was no intimation of that meeting of the Cabinet for the "final revision" of the Emancipation Proclamation, and there was some apprehension throughout the country that the President would be induced to refrain from issuing the edict on the 1st of January as was promised in the preliminary document. When New Year's Day arrived all things moved along as usual at the White House. The great popular reception was more brilliant and more largely attended than any like func-

<sup>11</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 164.

tion under President Lincoln had been, and there was no mention of the momentous document that was known to be due at sometime during that day. The anxious nation, and the attentive world, were listening to every click of the telegraphic machinery which at length announced that the proclamation of freedom had been signed by President Lincoln. He had been severely taxed by the prolonged New Year's Day reception, and his right hand was swollen from greeting the thousands of people during several successive hours, but there is no trace of tremor in the signature "Abraham Lincoln" which was that day attached to the Emancipation Proclamation that was the beginning of the end of slavery in

"The land of the free, and the home of the brave."

In the great centers of population there were cannon in readiness to boom forth the glad tidings, and before nightfall the rural districts also were alive with demonstrations of patriotic delight.

Mr. Lincoln repeatedly avowed his conviction that the Emancipation Proclamation was constitutional and valid and would never be declared otherwise. Before issuing it he stated many times and with great clearness and force that it was not only his right but his imperative duty to employ all necessary means to preserve the Union. His illustration of a surgeon "sacrificing a limb to save a life" was an unequivocal declaration of his belief in the validity of the measures that destroyed slavery to save the nation. In the final Emancipation Proclamation he expressed the belief that that document was "warranted by the constitution upon military necessity" and that belief was many times expressed by him in clear and forceful language. Six months after the final proclamation was issued, in a letter to General S. A. Hurlbut, dated July 31st, 1863, he said of the proclamation: "I think it is valid in law and will be so held by the courts. . . . Those who shall have tasted actual freedom I believe can never be slaves or quasi-slaves again."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., p. 22.

August 26th, 1863, in the Conkling letter he said to the opponents of his administration in Illinois: "You dislike the Emancipation Proclamation, and perhaps would have it retracted. You say it is unconstitutional. I think differently. I think the Constitution invests its commander-in-chief with the law of war in time of war. The most that can be said—if so much—is that slaves are property. Is there—has there ever been—any question that by the law of war, property, both of enemies and friends, may be taken when needed? And is it not needed whenever taking it helps us, or hurts the enemy." <sup>13</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's

#### FIDELITY TO EMANCIPATION

was one of the most beautiful features of his life. From the 22nd of July, 1862, when he first submitted the preliminary proclamation to the Cabinet, he never wavered in his adherence to the policy that gave freedom to the slaves. Of necessity that policy to be effective had to include the enlistment and training of colored soldiers and their participation in military activities, the employment by the government of colored laborers and care for dependent colored people.

All this and more of a kindred character President Lincoln accepted without hesitation or reserve and supported with all the authority and power with which his great office was invested.

He did not enter upon that policy rashly nor with haste. Before his first inauguration he realized that Emancipation might become a necessity and he conferred freely, though in strict confidence, with Hon. Robert J. Walker relative to the matter before he had been President three-fourths of a year.

On the 21st of November, 1861, in an interview with Governor Walker and Mr. James R. Gilmore, in disclosing the possibility of an edict of freedom, he said: "If such a proclamation should once be issued we should have to stand

<sup>13</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., p. 98.

by it and refuse any settlement with the South that did not recognize the freedom of the slave.”<sup>14</sup>

That was just like Abraham Lincoln, and during succeeding years that statement to Walker and Gilmore was followed by many declarations of a similar character, and by such measures as were needed to make them effective.

On the evening after he had signed the final Emancipation Proclamation, in a conversation with Mr. Colfax, President Lincoln declared: “The South had fair warning that if they did not return to their duty I should strike at the pillar of their strength. The promise must now be kept and I shall never recall one word.”

August 26th, 1863, in the Conkling letter before mentioned, he said: “The proclamation as law either is valid or it is not valid. If it is not valid it needs no retraction. If it is valid it cannot be retracted any more than the dead can be brought to life. . . . Negroes, like other people, act upon motives. Why should they do anything for us if we will do nothing for them? If they stake their lives for us they must be prompted by the strongest motives, even the promise of freedom. And that promise being made must be kept.”<sup>15</sup>

December 8th, 1863, President Lincoln in his annual message to Congress, in referring to the messages relating to slavery, indited these weighty words: “Those laws and proclamations were enacted and put forth for the purpose of aiding in the suppression of the Rebellion. To give them their fullest effect, there had to be a pledge for their maintenance. In my judgment they have aided, and will further aid, the cause for which they were intended. To now abandon them would be not only to relinquish a lever of power, but would also be a cruel and an astonishing breach of faith. I may add, at this point, that while I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation; nor shall I return to slavery any per-

<sup>14</sup> Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln, p. 60.

<sup>15</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., pp. 99-100.

son who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the acts of Congress.”<sup>16</sup>

Accompanying the annual message from which the foregoing is quoted, President Lincoln sent to Congress a proclamation of amnesty which he had issued, in which he required all insurgents desiring pardon to take and subscribe to the following oath: “I, ———, do solemnly swear, in presence of Almighty God, that I will henceforth faithfully support, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and the union of the States thereunder; and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all acts of Congress passed during the existing Rebellion with reference to slaves, so long and so far as not repealed, modified, or held void by Congress, or by decision of the Supreme Court; and that I will, in like manner, abide by and faithfully support all proclamations of the President made during the existing Rebellion having reference to slaves, so long and so far as not modified or declared void by decision of the Supreme Court. So help me God.”<sup>17</sup>

July 9th, 1864, in a letter to Horace Greeley, he stated that any terms of peace to be considered by him must include “the restoration of the Union and the abandonment of slavery.”

July 18th, 1864, in a proclamation “to whom it may concern,” he repeated the statement that terms of peace must include “the abandonment of slavery,” and the parole prepared by him about the same time required those who should seek parole to pledge their honors not to hinder nor discourage the enlistment or employment by the Union Government of colored soldiers.

August 15th, 1864, in an interview with John T. Mills, he declared that he “should deserve to be damned in time and eternity” if he should “return to slavery the black warriors of the Union Army,” and added, “come what will I will keep

<sup>16</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., p. 249.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 220.

my faith with friend and foe. . . . No human power can subdue this Rebellion without the use of the Emancipation policy and every other policy calculated to weaken the moral and physical forces of the Rebellion."

December 6th, 1864, after his re-election, in his annual message to Congress, the President made the following remarkable declaration: "In presenting the abandonment of armed resistance to the national authority on the part of the insurgents as the only indispensable condition to ending the war on the part of the Government, I retract nothing heretofore said as to slavery. I repeat the declaration made a year ago, that 'while I remain in my present position I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation, or by any of the acts of Congress.'

"If the people should, by whatever mode or means, make it an executive duty to re-enslave such persons, another, and not I must be their instrument to perform it." <sup>18</sup>

In publishing this statement by President Lincoln, Mr. Blaine in his great work says: "This was fair notice by Mr. Lincoln to all the world that so long as he was President the absolute validity of the Proclamation would be maintained at all hazards." <sup>19</sup>

January 31st, 1865, in his instructions to Seward, who was to confer with the Confederate Commissioners at Hampton Roads, the President said: "No receding by the Executive of the United States, on the slavery question, from the position assumed thereon in the late annual message to Congress and in preceding documents."

February 3rd, 1865, in his own and Mr. Seward's interview with those Commissioners "the President announced that he must not be expected to depart from the positions he had heretofore assumed in his Proclamation of Emancipation and

<sup>18</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 310.

<sup>19</sup> Twenty Years of Congress, Vol. I., p. 535.

other documents as these positions were reiterated in his last annual message."

During that same interview at Hampton Roads, the Southern Commissioners were informed that Congress on the 31st of December had, by the requisite majority voted to submit to the states a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery throughout the Union, and that it would undoubtedly be approved by three-fourths of the states and become a part of the national organic law. This was startling information for the Southern Commissioners, for they had not before learned of the result of the vote in the House of Representatives, and like those who voted against the amendment in Congress, they were cherishing the hope that the proposition would fail to receive the requisite two-thirds affirmative vote.

Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, one of the Confederate Commissioners, in his account of this interview states that President Lincoln said to the Commissioners that "he never would change or modify the terms of the proclamation in the slightest particular."<sup>20</sup>

February 10th, 1865, in his message to the House of Representatives, giving desired information respecting the Hampton Roads Conference, President Lincoln said: "The whole substance of the instructions to the Secretary of State, heretofore cited, was stated and insisted upon, and nothing was said inconsistent therewith."<sup>21</sup>

April 3rd, 1865, during his brief visit at Richmond, upon seeing large numbers of the colored people kneeling before him, he said: "Do not kneel to me; that is not right. You must kneel to God only, and thank Him for the liberty you will hereafter enjoy. I am but God's humble instrument; but you may rest assured that as long as I live no one will put a shackle on your limbs, and you shall have the rights which God has given to every other free citizen of this Republic." (Admiral Porter's report.)

<sup>20</sup> War Between the States, Vol. II., pp. 610-611.

<sup>21</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. XI., p. 28.

In the final Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln promised to "recognize and maintain the freedom" of those who should be made free by that edict, and now standing in the street of the captured capital of the insurgents, with the Rebellion falling into ruins all about him, he solemnly and in the name of God renewed that promise to the bewildered and black throng before him. The assurance he then gave them was the climax of all he had before said relative to the perpetuity of their freedom, and the scene was suitable for the closing days of the life of the great Emancipator. It will richly reward the reader carefully to study the foregoing quotations and to note the fidelity and care with which Mr. Lincoln, as lawyer and statesman, closes up every avenue by which hostile influences could creep in and interfere with the efficacy of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Very wide publicity has been given to the misleading statement that at the Hampton Roads Conference, February 3rd, 1865, President Lincoln handed Vice-President Alexander H. Stephens—one of the Confederate Commissioners—a blank sheet of paper, promising as he did so, to sign any terms of peace with the restoration of the Union which Mr. Stephens would write upon it.

This statement has received such a measure of verification that it has been given general credence and has led to the impression that at that Conference Mr. Lincoln offered to compromise with the South respecting slavery. We do not know with certainty that such an event occurred, but we do know with absolute certainty that Mr. Lincoln at that conference assured the Confederate Commissioners that there would be no receding from the position the Union Government had taken respecting slavery. This was stated very clearly by him before the Conference met, was repeated by him during the Conference, as Mr. Stephens himself states, and it was included by Mr. Lincoln in his report to Congress relative to the interview with the Confederate Commissioners. Therefore, if Mr. Lincoln made Mr. Stephens the proposition before

recited, Mr. Stephens knew at the time that it did not include any suggestion of compromise respecting slavery.

But while President Lincoln expressed his purpose to adhere strictly to the Emancipation policy of the General Government he assured the Commissioners that he would favor the appropriation by Congress of four hundred million dollars as compensation to the South for financial loss sustained by the freeing of the slaves. He told the Commissioners that he believed he could secure favorable action of Congress upon that proposition, and had his offer at that time been accepted it would not only have accomplished the immediate cessation of hostilities and thus prevented the great loss and suffering of the months that followed, but it would also have enabled the South to retire from the struggle in better financial condition than was the North. But acting under their instruction from Jefferson Davis, those Commissioners were not at liberty even to consider Mr. Lincoln's suggestion.

Mr. Lincoln, when he adopted the Emancipation policy,

#### WAS NOT CERTAIN

that it would be helpful to the Union cause. He knew it would arouse into more violent activity the hostile influences arrayed against him, and he hoped it would stimulate the zeal of all friends of the Government.

September 24th, 1862, at a serenade given on the occasion of the preliminary proclamation which had been issued two days before, President Lincoln said: "What I did I did after a very full deliberation and under a very heavy and solemn sense of responsibility. I can only trust in God I have made no mistake."

In his annual message to Congress, December 8th, 1863, Mr. Lincoln, in reviewing this period of his administration, remarks: "The policy of emancipation and of employing black soldiers, gave to the future a new aspect, about which hope and fear and doubt contended in uncertain conflict."

There is a graphic picture of that conflict in the account of President Lincoln's interview with the delegation from Chicago on the 13th of September, 1862, during which he said: "What good would a proclamation of emancipation from me do, especially as we are now situated? I do not want to issue a document that the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the Pope's bull against the comet. Would my word free the slaves, when I cannot even enforce the Constitution in the rebel States? It would help somewhat at the North, though not so much, I fear, as you and those you represent imagine. . . . I am not so sure we could do much with the blacks. If we were to arm them, I fear that in a few weeks the arms would be in the hands of the rebels. . . . There are fifty thousand bayonets in the Union arms from the Border slave states. It would be a serious matter if, in consequence of a proclamation such as you desire, they should go over to the rebels." <sup>22</sup>

Summing up all these apprehensions and also the hopes which he cherished, the utmost that Mr. Lincoln could confidently anticipate as to the influence on the Union cause of a policy of emancipation, is stated by him in his review of these events in the Hodges letter of April 4th, 1864, in the following: "In choosing it (emancipation) I hoped for greater gain than loss, but of this I was not entirely confident." <sup>23</sup>

But, notwithstanding his misgivings at the time respecting the influence of emancipation upon the Union cause, after it had been fairly tried, Mr. Lincoln gave strong testimony to the helpfulness of that policy in the nation's struggle for existence.

August 26th, 1863, in the Conkling letter he said: "Some of the commanders of our armies in the field who have given us our most important successes, believe the Emancipation policy and the use of the colored troops constitute the heaviest blow yet dealt to the Rebellion, and that at least one of these

<sup>22</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., pp. 30, 32-33.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., Vol. X., p. 65.

important successes could not have been achieved when it was, without the aid of black soldiers."

And in the same letter is the following graphic and thrilling statement: "Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon, and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. . . . And then there will be some black men who can remember that with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well poised bayonet, they have helped mankind on to this great consummation, while I fear there will be some white ones unable to forget that with malignant heart and deceitful speech they strove to hinder it." <sup>24</sup>

December 8th, 1863, after the employment of colored soldiers in the army had been for eleven months in operation, in his annual message to Congress, the President stated that a hundred thousand colored soldiers were connected with the Union Army, that they were "as good soldiers as any," that "no servile insurrection, or tendency to violence or cruelty, has marked the measures of emancipation and arming the blacks," and that their employment by the Government had taken from the resources of the Rebellion and added to the strength and success of the Union forces. "Tennessee and Arkansas," said he, "have been substantially cleared of insurgent control and influential citizens in each, owners of slaves and advocates of slavery at the beginning of the Rebellion now declare openly for emancipation in their respective states." "In Maryland and Missouri the people who had been favorable to slavery and to its unhindered extension into the territories of the nation, only dispute now as to the best mode of removing it within their own limits." And to these statements of achievement under the Emancipation policy with seeming relief and gratitude, he added: "The crisis which threatened to defeat the friends of the Union is passed." <sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., pp. 101-102.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 246-247.

April 4th, 1864—four months after the beforementioned message to Congress—in the Hodges letter Mr. Lincoln said: "More than a year of trial now shows no loss by it in our foreign relations, none in our home popular sentiment, none in our white military force—no loss by it any how or any where. On the contrary, it shows a gain of quite a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, seamen and laborers. These are palpable facts about which, as facts, there can be no caviling. We have the men; and we could not have had them without the measure." <sup>26</sup>

August 15th, 1864, after the Emancipation policy had been in operation more than a year and a half, in an interview with General John T. Mills, President Lincoln said: "There are now in the service of the United States nearly one hundred and fifty thousand able-bodied colored men, most of them under arms, defending and acquiring Union territory. . . . Abandon all the posts now garrisoned by black men, take one hundred and fifty thousand men from our side and put them in the battlefield or cornfield against us, and we would be compelled to abandon the war in three weeks. . . . No human power can subdue this Rebellion without the use of the Emancipation policy and every other policy calculated to weaken the moral and physical force of the Rebellion. Freedom has given us one hundred and fifty thousand men raised on Southern soil. It will give us more yet. Just so much it has subtracted from the enemy, and, instead of alienating the South there are now evidences of a fraternal feeling growing up between our men and the rank and file of the rebel soldiers. Let my enemies prove to the country that the destruction of slavery is not necessary to the restoration of the Union. I will abide the issue." <sup>27</sup>

Many strong and stubborn influences combined to delay the adoption of the Emancipation policy, but Mr. Lincoln was not chargeable with that delay. Upon those who from

<sup>26</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 65.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 191.

whatever motive opposed emancipation rested the responsibility for the prolonged withholding by the President of the proclamation of freedom. As soon as he could do so legally and effectively Mr. Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation. Respecting this in his interview with George Thompson, he said: "It is my conviction that, had the proclamation been issued even six months earlier than it was, public sentiment would not have sustained it. Just so, as to the subsequent action in reference to enlisting blacks in the Border States. The step taken sooner, could not, in my judgment, have been carried out. . . . We have seen this great revolution in public sentiment slowly but surely progressing so that, when the final action came, the opposition was not strong enough to defeat the purpose." <sup>28</sup>

But, although that "opposition" could not "defeat the purpose," it could and did delay the issuing of the proclamation of which Mr. Lincoln said: "It is the central act of my administration and the great event of the nineteenth century."

But important and helpful as was that proclamation it could not make any portion of the nation free territory. It applied to slaves but not to slavery. It freed all the slaves in the insurgent states and it pledged the national Government to "recognize and maintain" their freedom. But it could not repeal nor modify the constitutions and laws of those states granting the right to hold slaves. Slaves were regarded and dealt with as property, and as such they could be given freedom as an act of war. But the right to hold slaves in those states being granted by state constitutions and laws would remain untouched by the proclamation and would be in full force upon the return of peace and the restoration of normal conditions. Those who had been made free by the proclamation could not be again enslaved, but others could be under the constitutions and laws authorizing slavery. The general Government as an act of war could take all the horses

<sup>28</sup> Six Months in the White House, p. 77.

owned in the insurgent states, but it could not deny the people of those states the right to hold property in horses after peace was restored. No more could the General Government deny or abridge the right to hold property in slaves in the insurgent states when there was no "military necessity" for so doing. Under the rights "reserved to the states" by the national Constitution the property rights of the property in times of peace were untouched by the Emancipation Proclamation. Pro-slavery people in the insurgent states who were opposed to emancipation understood all this and declared their purpose to re-establish slavery when peace should be restored.

This purpose was expressed by Senator Garrett Davis of Kentucky, when, in a speech in the senate, he said: "If you should liberate the slaves in the rebellious States, the moment you reorganize the white inhabitants of these states, as states of the Union, they would reduce these slaves again to a state of slavery, or they would expel them, or hunt them like wild beasts and exterminate them."

In President Lincoln's strong testimony to the validity and effectiveness of the Emancipation Proclamation, he never stated nor intimated that it accomplished all that was in his heart to achieve respecting slavery. He regarded and declared slavery to be "the root of the Rebellion," and he was fully convinced that the future peace and prosperity of the nation required that it be utterly exterminated. But he did not issue the Emancipation Proclamation with the expectation that it would destroy slavery, although he cherished the hope that it would be followed by other measures that would accomplish that result.

Therefore, in the preliminary proclamation President Lincoln stated his purpose to recommend in his next annual message to Congress such action as would tend to promote the abolition of slavery by the loyal slave-holding states. And from that day he was untiring in his efforts to encourage and aid such action in states not included in the Emancipation Proclamation.



### LINCOLN AND THE CONTRABANDS

From a photograph of the original painting by J. L. G. Ferris. The elder woman is Lucretia Mott, noted abolitionist.  
By courtesy of the artist and of Wolff & Company, Philadelphia.



## VIII

### CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

**W**HEN on the 8th of December, 1863, the Thirty-eighth Congress convened for its first session the Emancipation Proclamation had been in force for more than eleven months. All of the members of the House of Representatives of that Congress had been chosen by the people after the preliminary proclamation was issued, and, as already stated, in some cases the proclamation seemed to have exerted an influence on the election unfavorable to the administration. But during the year and more between the election and the convening of Congress there had been great advance in antislavery sentiment throughout the loyal states, and the achievements of the army with its addition of colored troops were proving the wisdom of the Emancipation policy. On the other hand, the efforts by compensation and other methods to secure the abolition of slavery by the action of slave holding, loyal states had not met with encouraging success, and gave little promise of accomplishing the destruction of slavery. But the purpose to remove the evil that all knew had caused the Rebellion and to leave no cancerous root to cause future trouble had become strong and intense in all the free states and was rapidly increasing in the loyal portions of the South.

The President in his annual message to Congress gave a glowing account of the workings of emancipation and especially the employment of colored troops in the Union Army; and in discussing the proclamation of freedom he made the famous declaration that he would never "return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that proclamation." He referred very briefly, but earnestly, to his favorite proposition for compensation to "the states not included in the

Emancipation Proclamation" which should abolish slavery, and submitted an Amnesty Proclamation he had issued for insurgents who wished to resume allegiance to the National Government.

Thus the historic Thirty-eighth Congress began its first session in an atmosphere surcharged with hostility to slavery, and on the 14th of December—as early as possible after Congress convened—two Constitutional amendments abolishing and prohibiting slavery were introduced in the House, the first by Hon. James M. Ashley of Ohio, and the other by Hon. James F. Wilson of Iowa.

No action of a similar character was taken in the Senate until after the Holiday recess, when on the 11th of January Senator J. B. Henderson of Missouri introduced a joint resolution as a Constitutional Amendment abolishing slavery, and nearly a month later, on the 8th of February, Senator Sumner of Massachusetts introduced a similar joint resolution which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, as the measure introduced by Senator Henderson had been.

Senator Sumner asked to have his proposition referred to a special committee of which he was chairman, but finally acquiesced—though reluctantly—in its assignment to the Judiciary Committee. The very courteously worded rivalry between those two committees seems to have hastened the consideration of the two propositions, for after only two days, Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, reported a joint resolution differing in its phraseology from both of the resolutions which had been referred to his committee. Mr. Sumner clung to the phrase "equality before the law," which he had copied into his resolution from the constitution of revolutionary France, but the consensus of opinion in the Senate was against him and the resolution as reported by Senator Trumbull was accepted for consideration, being in language almost identical with the Ordinance of 1787. The following is the Constitutional Amendment thus reported and considered by Congress from

the 10th of February, 1864, to the 31st of January, 1865, when it was passed and became part of the national Constitution, by being approved by the legislatures of three-fourths of the States:

### ARTICLE XIII

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

A Presidential election was soon to be held and it was the purpose of the republican leaders to make this amendment an issue in that election, and to ask that it be approved by the people either as having been favorably acted upon by Congress or as still pending there.

With this in view the Senators and Representatives who favored and those who opposed the measure improved the succeeding weeks in preparation for the battle of giants that all knew would occur when it should be brought up for consideration and action. There was never any doubt that the amendment would receive the requisite two-thirds vote in the senate, but our statesmen were making history and were also preparing for the great struggle during the Presidential campaign. Therefore, when on the 28th of March, 1864, Senator Trumbull opened the debate on the measure he was followed by other senators whose speeches were of great erudition and strength.

On the 8th of April, 1864, the amendment passed the senate by a vote of 38 to 6, and was soon after taken up in the house where, as Mr. Blaine says, "Mr. Ashley of Ohio, by common consent assumed parliamentary charge of the measure."<sup>1</sup>

As there was at that time no probability of the amendment receiving the requisite two-thirds vote in the House, its con-

<sup>1</sup> Twenty Years of Congress, Vol. I., p. 507.

sideration in that body was conducted with a view to its influence upon the Presidential campaign then in progress. Only three days—May 31st, June 14th and 15th—were given to its discussion, which was of dynamic force and effectiveness. On the 7th of June—between the beginning of the discussion on the 31st of May and its resumption on the 14th of June—President Lincoln was unanimously renominated by a national convention which with wild enthusiasm endorsed the amendment and applauded every favorable reference to the subject.

On the 15th of June the vote was taken and resulted in yeas 94, noes 64—a large but not a two-thirds majority. So the amendment seemed for the time disposed of and hopelessly lost, until General Ashley, having the measure in charge, changed his vote to the negative and so gained the right, of which he at once availed himself, to move a reconsideration, and thus to place the measure on the docket and keep it before the house for further consideration and action.

This skillful parliamentary maneuver was a stunning surprise to the opponents of the proposed amendment, and none of its friends were expecting such action. The great interest awakened by the proposition soon subsided and the measure seemed to be forgotten when, on the 28th of June—thirteen days after this unsuccessful vote—Mr. Holman, a democratic member from Indiana, inquired whether the motion to reconsider would be called up during that session of Congress. This question at once elicited the attention of every member and all listened intently as General Ashley replied: "I do not propose to call the motion up during the present session of Congress, but as the record has been made up we will go to the country on the issue thus presented . . . and when the verdict of the people shall have been rendered next November, I trust this Congress will return determined to engraft that verdict into the National Constitution." The scene that followed this episode can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it and realized its significance. There was profound

silence and scarce a movement as the members by this answer were brought to realize that the Constitutional Amendment was still before them and would be passed upon by the people before it would again be brought before them for decision. Those who favored it believed the issue would be helpful to the campaign for President Lincoln's re-election, and those who were opposed to it were apprehensive that making it an issue at the Presidential election would be harmful to their chance for continuance in Congress. All realized that the trend of events and evolution of public sentiment were against slavery, but to secure the adoption of the amendment by that Congress was a task of such huge proportions that it required great courage and determination to undertake it. What rendered the task appalling was that it would require 122 votes to pass the amendment if all members of the House should be present and vote, and that only 94 votes—28 less than that required number—had been cast in its favor on the 15th of June. And the additional votes required to pass the measure had to be secured among the 64 members who voted against it or the 24 who did not vote. It was not a struggle to win the votes of ordinary men, but a contest for the conquest of men of mettle, as it usually requires superior strength of personality and gifts of leadership to become a member of Congress.

Of far greater force and more stubborn than any other obstacle was the prejudice against the Negro race which was entertained by many people. That prejudice was largely the product of slavery and had been built up into great strength and was intensified into bitterness by antislavery teachings and movements, and especially by this effort to accomplish the utter destruction of slavery in the nation. Added to this was the hostility to abolitionists and their teachings and the unwise efforts by which some members of Congress were moved to oppose the proposed amendment.

But of all the mountains of difficulty which the proponents of the measure encountered and were required to surmount,

the greatest was the intense partisan hostility to the proposed abolition of slavery. The solid republican membership of the House was for the amendment, and the only opposition it encountered came from the democrats, who seemed to regard the fate of their party as involved in the struggle. Under the leadership of Calhoun and his associates and followers, the democratic party—the party of Jefferson—had become so fully committed and so thoroughly identified with slavery that the continuance of that institution seemed necessary to the maintenance of the future existence and integrity of that party. And the future political hopes of democrats were dependent upon the continuance and success of the democratic party. This applied to war democrats who had united with the Union party to support the Government against the Rebellion, with the expectation of resuming their allegiance to the democratic party when normal conditions were again restored. To all such, as well as to those democrats who adhered to their party during the war, the destruction of slavery seemed to imperil their party and their own future political life. It was impossible to prevent the amendment from appearing as a party measure. It was known to all that it was strongly favored by the President and that, as already stated in this chapter, it had been unanimously endorsed by the great Baltimore Convention with scarcely less enthusiasm than that which greeted the President's renomination and the approval of his administration. Not only was it treated with enthusiastic hospitality by the convention, but throughout the Presidential campaign it was made an issue before the people, as was forecast by General Ashley in the House on the 28th of June. All this was helpful to secure in November the verdict of the people for a Constitutional Amendment abolishing and forever prohibiting slavery, but it intensified partisan hostility to that movement and made it more difficult when Congress reassembled to induce democratic members to change their attitudes to the question and vote for the amendment then pending in the House.

My recollections of the incidents connected with that long and arduous struggle for the destruction of slavery by Constitutional Amendment are as distinct as is my remembrance of the events of yesterday. I was upon terms of close personal friendship with members of Congress who had been lifelong democrats, but were loyal and true to the Government during the Rebellion, and I heard from them many emphatic declarations of their apprehensions that the destruction of slavery would require such a new alignment of political parties throughout the nation as would make uncertain the future public career of any democrat who voted for the pending Constitutional Amendment.

The extent to which loyal democrats were disturbed by the antislavery trend of the times is indicated in a letter addressed to President Lincoln by Mr. Charles D. Robinson, an editor of Wisconsin. Mr. Robinson was a staunch Union man of sterling character and a zealous adherent and champion of the democratic party. His support of the Government in its efforts to suppress the Rebellion had been unequivocal and cordial. But after Mr. Lincoln had been renominated on a platform that endorsed the Constitutional Amendment and had in his Niagara Falls correspondence declared that there would be no receding from the positions taken relative to slavery, Mr. Robinson, on the 7th of August, 1864, sent the President a frank and manly statement of the difficulties he was confronting in his efforts to remain loyal to the administration in its attitude to slavery. In that letter he stated that he had hitherto sustained the President's Emancipation Policy on the ground that it deprived the South of its laborers and thus undermined the strength of the Rebellion. But he declared that the attitude of the Government toward slavery "puts the whole war question on a new basis, and takes us war democrats clear off our feet, leaving us no ground to stand upon. If we sustain the war and the war policy, does it not demand the changing of our party policies? I venture to write you this letter, then, not for the purpose

of finding fault with your policy—for that you have a right to fix upon without consulting any of us—but in the hope that you may suggest some interpretation of it, as well as make it tenable ground on which we war democrats may stand—preserve our party consistency—support the Government—and continue to carry also to its support those large numbers of our old political friends who have stood by us up to this time.”<sup>2</sup>

Among those democratic members of Congress who voted against the amendment there were many in precisely the condition described by Mr. Robinson in the foregoing letter. They realized that their party was so committed to the defense of slavery that for them to vote for the proposed amendment would be to commit political suicide. And yet to induce men to do that was the only method by which democratic members of Congress who had voted against that amendment could be prevailed upon to change their votes and support the measure.

That was the situation which in the campaign for the passing of the amendment by that House of Representatives had to be faced\* from the adjournment of Congress on the Fourth of July, 1864, until the final vote was taken on the 31st of January, 1865. Unfortunately for all the interests involved, the Wade-Davis embroglio, mentioned elsewhere in this volume, sprang up among the Union leaders immediately after the adjournment of Congress and seemed for a time likely to defeat the Union party. But the Constitutional Amendment served to hold the administration forces together and to overcome the disintegrating influence of that inexcusable revolt. Some extremely radical antislavery men, who were ever ready to antagonize and embarrass the President, because of his conservative nature and policies, were kept from participating in that embroglio by their great interest in the Constitutional Amendment, the adoption of which they knew would be impossible without Mr. Lincoln's re-election.

<sup>2</sup> Abraham Lincoln, *A History*, Vol. IX., p. 214.

And every favorable issue in the field, every victory won, every encouraging prospect contributed to the strength of the campaign for the President's re-election and the endorsement by the people of that vital measure.

At the time the vote was taken on the 15th of June it was known that Henry Winter Davis of Maryland and Francis P. Blair of Missouri would vote for the amendment whenever their votes would secure its passage, and there were several other members who voted against the measure at that time of whom the same was believed to be true. But the task of securing a sufficient number of such changes to pass the amendment was herculean and very few of its supporters hoped for success.

By parliamentary courtesy the campaign for votes was continued under General Ashley's management and was given his constant attention. His own re-election was regarded so fully assured that his great gifts of leadership could be safely employed almost wholly in the interest of the amendment. Having an extensive acquaintance with members of the House and being a newspaper reporter I was, as General Ashley's secretary, constantly engaged in aiding him in the great work which, as Mr. Blaine says, "by common consent" was entrusted to him. Every member of the House and Senate who had favored the measure was interested in the movement to secure its passage at the next session of Congress and prominent men in all walks of life and in all the loyal states gave the proposition their earnest and energetic support. But all plans and efforts to win votes for the measure were kept constantly under the direction of General Ashley, in whose wisdom and ability for such work every friend of the amendment in and out of Congress had unquestioning confidence. Mr. Blaine says: "During the contest Mr. Ashley devoted himself with unswerving fidelity and untiring zeal" to the work of securing the passage of the amendment. . . . "He made a forceful speech in support of the amendment, but the chief value of his work did not consist in speaking,

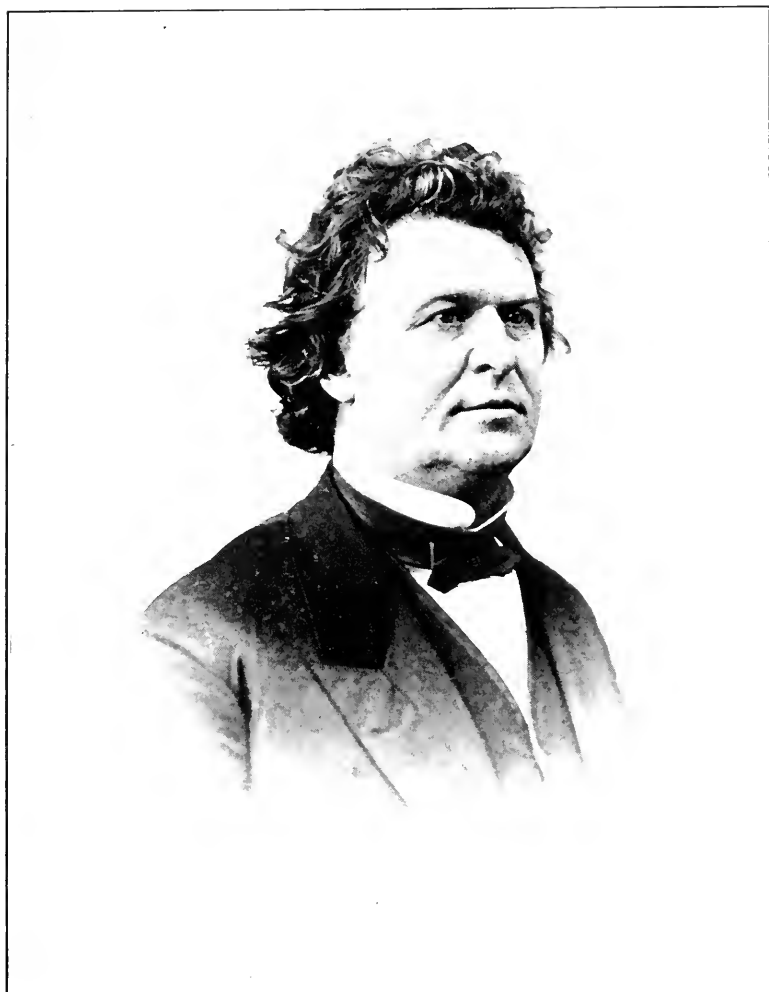
but in his watchful care of the measure, in the quick and intuitive judgment with which he discerned every man on the democratic side of the House who felt anxious as to the vote he should give on the momentous question, and in the pressure which he brought to bear upon him from the best and most influential of his constituents.”<sup>3</sup>

When Congress adjourned on the Fourth of July, 1864, General Ashley was thoroughly prepared to prosecute the campaign for the amendment during the recess and the early weeks of the next session, which would begin in December. Aided by the Hon. Henry Winter Davis of Maryland and Hon. Francis P. Blair, Jr., of Missouri, he prepared a list of nineteen Border State men whose votes against the amendment in June were believed to have been in conflict with their personal preferences. They were regarded as “men of broad and liberal views, and strong and self-reliant enough to follow their convictions even to political death, provided they could know that their votes would pass the measure.” He also secured a very large list of the names of influential men residing in the districts represented by those nineteen men of the House, to aid in bringing pressure to bear upon them to secure their votes for the amendment when it should again be brought before them.

Upon consultation with Hon. Reuben E. Fenton, Governor of New York, and Hon. Augustus Frank, member of Congress from that state, he prepared a list of seventeen Northern democrats whose votes he hoped to secure for the amendment, and also a list of their most influential constituents to aid in efforts to induce them to support the amendment. From Toledo, Ohio, his home city, he prosecuted the campaign, aided by a limited number of trusted friends, until near the time for the convening of Congress. The work was conducted with great vigor but quietly and with no public announcement of results attained.

Until after the election in November public thought and

<sup>3</sup> Twenty Years of Congress, Vol. I., p. 536.



HON. JAMES M. ASHLEY OF OHIO

Who introduced into Congress the first bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and the first Constitutional Amendment to abolish slavery in the United States. He had charge of both measures while they were before the House of Representatives. From a photograph by Brady, presented the author by General Ashley.



effort were so largely occupied with the Presidential campaign and members of the House were so deeply concerned by their own political interests that this nation-wide campaign in support of the amendment proceeded without attracting any considerable attention. Hence, this feature of the battle for the abolition of slavery by Constitutional Amendment has no mention in the history of those times, because it was unknown to those who wrote that history. Before the adjournment of Congress in July there was much to encourage the hope that the amendment would pass the House during the next session if the election in November indicated that it was approved by the people. Therefore, when President Lincoln was re-elected by a popular majority of 411,281 and an electoral majority of 191, with a new House of Representatives consisting of 138 Unionists and 35 democrats, the campaign in support of the amendment took on new life and was prosecuted with greatly increased vigor and hope of success.

The first thrilling achievement during this period was made known by a letter to General Ashley from Hon. George H. Yeaman, a democratic member of the House from Kentucky, and one of the ablest and most influential of the Border State delegation. On the 11th of December, 1862, Judge Yeaman offered in the House resolutions declaring the Emancipation Proclamation "unwarranted by the Constitution and a useless and dangerous war measure." He had always been allied with the pro-slavery forces and opposed the Constitutional Amendment during the preceding session of Congress; but after the verdict of the people in November he at once wrote General Ashley informing him of his purpose to speak, vote and work for the passage of the amendment. Coming as it did before the reconvening of Congress and at a time when the opposing forces were advancing for the decisive struggle, that letter from the distinguished Kentucky democrat, filled with enthusiasm every one of the little group who were permitted to know its contents. Like similar letters received during those weeks it was held strictly confidential, and not until

his very able speech in support of the amendment was delivered in the House was the public informed of Judge Yeaman's alignment with those who favored that measure.

The election in November made certain the passage of this, or an equally acceptable amendment, by the next Congress if the House failed at this time to approve of the pending measure. This was both helpful and harmful to the campaign then in progress. It was helpful to know that it revealed the people's approval of the amendment and sounded the death-knell of slavery by constitutional provision, but that also caused some members whose votes were being sought to hesitate in taking action that would imperil their own political life when the measure was assured of ultimate success without their support.

The certainty of success in the next Congress, if not in this, caused President Lincoln very earnestly to desire the passage of the amendment at this session. He was perfectly satisfied with the provisions and language of the impending measure, and believing that the Rebellion would soon be overcome, he was apprehensive that victory in the field would be so fully satisfying to the public and to the Government that less effective provisions respecting slavery might be adopted. This apprehension caused him to urge members of the House in personal interviews and otherwise to pass the amendments with least possible delay. In his annual message of December 6th, 1864, he said:

"At the last session of Congress a proposed amendment of the Constitution, abolishing slavery throughout the United States, passed the Senate, but failed for lack of the requisite two-thirds vote in the House of Representatives. Although the present is the same Congress, and nearly the same members, and without questioning the wisdom or patriotism of those who stood in opposition, I venture to recommend the reconsideration and passage of the measure at the present session. Of course the abstract question is not changed, but an intervening election shows, almost certainly, that the next

Congress will pass the measure if this does not. Hence there is only a question of time as to when the proposed amendment will go to the States for their action. And as it is to so go, at all events, may we not agree that the sooner the better? It is not claimed that the election has imposed a duty on members to change their views or their votes any further than as an additional element to be considered, their judgment may be affected by it. It is the voice of the people now for the first time heard upon the question. In a great national crisis like ours, unanimity of action among those seeking a common end is very desirable—almost indispensable. And yet no approach to such unanimity is attainable unless some deference shall be paid to the will of the majority, simply because it is the will of the majority. In this case the common end is the maintenance of the Union, and among the means to secure that end, such will, through the election, is most clearly declared in favor of such Constitutional Amendment.”<sup>4</sup>

During the reading of this portion of the President's message upon the face of each member of the House could be read his attitude toward the proposed amendment. Every one who was eager for its passage was like Moses, who, when he descended from the Mount, “wist not that the skin of his face shone.” Those who had decided to change their vote and support the measure had an illumination of strengthened purpose which they sought in vain to conceal. Those who were still undecided as to their course, but with a strong inclination in favor of the amendment, had deep agitation depicted on their faces; while those who were settled in their purpose to oppose the measure were of gloomy and ghastly visage. There was no sneering or expressions of anger, although all realized that the greatest and most important struggle in the history of Congress had come.

As the Congress then in session would expire on the 4th of March it was decided to announce before the Holiday

<sup>4</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., pp. 303-304.

recess when the motion to reconsider the vote on the amendment would be called up for consideration. Therefore, on the 15th of December, General Ashley stated in the House that on Friday, the 6th of January, 1865, he would ask to have his motion for reconsideration taken up for discussion. The announcement was expected and attracted the attention of every member present, many of whom instantly arose and with manifestation of great interest made inquiry respecting the matter. There was no Holiday recess for those who were engaged in efforts to secure votes for the amendment. In the seclusion of General Ashley's committee room in the Capitol confidential conferences were held with members of the House whose known view concerning the amendment and whose political status were such as to produce hope that they could be induced to support the measure, or to refrain from opposing or voting against it. President Lincoln kept in close touch with this work and gave it all possible and proper encouragement and assistance. He made frequent inquiries concerning the status of the movement and it was reported at the time that when he was informed that the measure was understood to lack only two votes of enough to pass it, he exclaimed with that subdued emphasis indicative of purposeful interest, "Only two votes? We must have those votes. Go and get them at once." But Mr. Lincoln was unyielding in his purpose not unduly to interfere with the prerogatives of Congress.

Hon. George W. Julian of Indiana, who was active in the campaign for the amendment, says: "The success of the measure had been considered very doubtful and depended upon certain negotiations the result of which was not fully assured and the particulars of which never reached the public."<sup>5</sup>

On the 29th of December, 1864, during the Holiday vacation, Judge Yeaman, whose espousal of the amendment I have before mentioned, sent General Ashley a second letter so characteristic of the messages he was then receiving and so

<sup>5</sup> Political Recollections, p. 250.

illustrative of the spirit by which democratic members who supported the amendment were dominated, that I reproduce it here in full, the original letter being now in my possession:

"Private.

Louisville, Dec. 29th, 1864.

Dear Sir:

You may have observed I was at work a good deal just before leaving Washington, so I will tell you what it was about if you will *keep it* awhile all to yourself. My battery is in position, my guns solid-shotted. I have the *range* and will fire just as soon as Mr. Speaker is kind enough to recognize "the gentleman from Ky." Of course, being, as I am, constitutionally and habitually a conservative man, I will have to rap you radicals a few good licks, especially your scheme of Reconstruction, but the *speech will carry Ky. for the amendment*, with great danger of cutting off my own head in my own district. But I will make the speech if it is the last I ever do make. I would like mine should be one of the first speeches in its favor and may not be back before the 10th. So do not hurry matters.

Yours,

GEORGE H. YEAMAN."

Similar to this letter from Judge Yeaman were the confidential conversations of Northern democrats and Border State men who had voted against the amendment in June and had decided to give it their support at this time.

The enlistment of Hon. Archibald McAllister of Pennsylvania in earnest support of the amendment added great impetus to the campaign. He was a man of heroic proportions and of distinguished appearance. He had not the gift of effective public address, but was possessed of a great fund of practical wisdom and tremendous strength of personality. He was very active in the work of persuading other democratic members to support the amendment and the brief written statement of his reasons for changing his attitude to the meas-

ure was read by the clerk of the House during the last hour of discussion and was one of the most dramatic features of that historic day.

Several Northern democrats and Border State men contributed very largely to the strength of the campaign for votes by their masterly eloquence in support of the amendment. Other Border State men and Northern democrats who had opposed the measure in June were not less influential in favor of the amendment, although not so prominent in discussions.

Fortunately there was no corruption fund to be used in opposing the measure. The South was a financial wreck; the Rebellion was in its last stage, and partisan interests were the only influences left to give zest to the discussion or strength to their activities against the amendment. Many members who were aligned against the measure earnestly desired its passage, although lacking the courage openly to support it. Others who personally favored it were absent or silent when the vote was taken and the certainty of the early doom of slavery, with the expected early collapse of the Rebellion, prevented filibustering as the last maneuver against a favorable vote. Another influence against filibustering tactics was the opposition's confidence in the defeat of the amendment which was unquestioning at the beginning of the session, the day the vote was taken and was not seriously disturbed until the final result was announced.

There was tremendous force in the debate from the 6th of January, when the motion to reconsider was called up, until the final vote was taken on the 31st of that month. I was present on the floor of the House during all of that discussion and noted with profound interest the spirit that prevailed and the arguments presented on both sides, together with scenes of special interest and significance.

A seriously disturbing rumor, put in circulation by the opponents of the amendment during the forenoon of the day the vote was taken, was effectively suppressed by the follow-

ing correspondence between the President and the member having the amendment in charge:\*

"House of Representatives, January 31, 1865.

Dear Sir:

The report is in circulation in the House that Peace Commissioners are on their way or in the city, and (it) is being used against us. If it is true, I fear we shall lose the bill. Please authorize me to contradict it, if it is not true.

Respectfully,

J. M. ASHLEY.

To the President."

ENDORSEMENT.

"So far as I know there are no Peace Commissioners in the city or likely to be in it.

January 31, 1865.

A. LINCOLN."

It required great skill and energy to contradict the harmful rumor after the President's reply was received, but it was successfully accomplished without distracting attention from the great question before the House. The discussion during all the time the measure was before the House was conducted with commendable courtesy, and to guard against a possible

\* At the time this exchange of messages occurred Messrs. Stephens, Hunter and Campbell, Confederate Commissioners appointed by Jefferson Davis, were on their way north from Richmond, and apart from President Lincoln and Secretaries Seward and Stanton, no loyal person in Washington knew of their coming. Somehow the Confederate sympathizers at Washington were informed of their appointment by Davis and their start for the north, and just as the forces in the House were closing in for a final struggle on the antislavery amendment, the rumor mentioned by General Ashley in his letter to the President was put in circulation by persons who were opposed to the amendment. Those Confederate Commissioners supposed they were coming to the Capital city and so did their friends at Washington, but they were stopped at Fortress Monroe, where President Lincoln met them on the 3rd of February for the famous Hampton Roads Conference, all of which shows how close the Confederate leaders kept in touch with their friends in the north.

<sup>6</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 349.

filibustering movement, the last hour of the time for debate was occupied by members in brief explanation of their votes. This, though not pleasing to some radical friends of the amendment, who were impatient to have the vote taken, was wise parliamentary strategy and was effective in preventing all dilatory proceedings. As the debate was closed and the members settled down to the roll-call some of the strong advocates of the measure nervously and in subdued tones said: "It is the toss of a copper," but General Ashley, knowing more than he had disclosed concerning the purposes of some members, maintained that on the final vote the majority for the amendment would be from four to seven more than was required for its passage.

The scene was one of imposing grandeur. All available space on the floor and in the galleries was occupied. Members of the Supreme Court and of the Senate, with many distinguished people, were in attendance, and the diplomatic gallery was brilliant with the colors worn by representatives from foreign nations.

The great chamber was filled with the atmosphere of intense purpose and all seemed to realize that the most momentous issue of the nation's history was about to be decided.

There were two motions and two roll-calls before the motion to pass the amendment was reached. The first was a motion to lay on the table the motion to reconsider the vote of June 15th. The vote against this motion, while sufficient to defeat it, was two less than the necessary two-thirds required to pass the amendment, and in the deep silence that prevailed Thaddeus Stevens and Elihu B. Washburne, two distinguished members of the House, were heard to say with solemnity, "General, we are defeated!" But in a ringing and inspiring voice that was heard in all the chamber and also in the galleries, General Ashley promptly replied: "No, gentlemen, we are not!"

Then came the motion made by General Ashley to recon-

sider the vote of June 15th when the amendment was defeated and which was called up by him on the 6th of January. This was known to be more nearly a test vote than was the one to lay on the table, and many threw down their tally sheets and pencils, utterly discouraged, when it was seen that the vote to reconsider lacked one of the two-thirds. But the motion to reconsider required only a majority and was carried, bringing the House to the original motion which failed in June to submit to the states the constitutional amendment abolishing and forever prohibiting slavery.

It now became difficult to proceed, as all realized that the knife was at the throat of slavery and that only one additional vote was required to accomplish its execution. There was a tear in the tone of the clerk as he proceeded with the final roll-call. Not a sound was heard as the vote was being taken save the voice of the clerk, and each member's aye or no as his name was called. The affirmative votes were given with far greater volume of voice than were those in the negative. Special emphasis was laid on the aye by some lifelong anti-slavery members, and a very few democrats responded with a no that had an undertone of bitterness. There was a sound of painful regret in some of the negative votes and in others there was a seeming apology and plea for pardon. Those members who for the first time then voted against slavery did so with that apparent delight which is experienced by those who escape from galling bondage.

These are not mere gleanings from contemporary documents. They are the impressions of an eye-witness whose soul was in his eyes as he witnessed those proceedings and made note of them for publication. But to proceed, the name of Governor English of Connecticut was reached early in the roll-call and his vote for the amendment, given with a strong, full voice, was greeted with hearty approval, as were the affirmative votes of other stalwart democrats. Especially enthusiastic were the greetings accorded the votes of those members whose purposes to support the amendment were not

known to the public until their names were reached in the final roll-call on that day.

When the member whose name was last on the roll had voted, the name of Speaker Colfax was called at his request, and his vote in the affirmative was greeted with generous applause, after which he arose and said: "The constitutional majority of two-thirds having voted in the affirmative the Joint Resolution is passed." Pencils and tally sheets had been so largely laid aside during this last vote, and both the friends and opponents of the measure were so fully convinced that it would be defeated that quite a period of silence and of seeming bewilderment elapsed before the audience realized that the amendment had been passed. There was then a scene such as had never before occurred in the House, and such as has seldom been witnessed in any great legislative body. An account of the event which I wrote for publication on the 31st of January, immediately after the vote was taken, is now before me, and is as follows:

"The House has just passed the Constitutional Amendment forever prohibiting slavery in the United States by a vote of 119 yeas to 56 noes—an excess of seven over the requisite two-thirds majority. A tremendous burst of applause both upon the floor and in the galleries greeted the announcement of the result. The Speaker demanded order and rapped loudly upon his desk, but joy beamed in his eye and the delighted expression of his countenance added fuel to the flames of enthusiasm which he could not suppress. None appeared in such an ecstasy of delight as the boys in blue, who were in attendance in large numbers. The opponents of the measure, as if terrified by these joyous demonstrations, seemed to shrink from the scrutiny of the delighted heroes in army uniform as frost-bitten plants wilt in the genial sunshine of the king of day.

"Of the three epochs in the history of our country, the landing of the Pilgrims, the signing of the Declaration of Independence, and the adoption of this antislavery amendment,

the latter in its importance is not the least. The prominent actors in the two former scenes are held in affectionate remembrance. Those of the latter are not less worthy. It is a source of just pride to every true American that not one of the immortals who signed the Declaration of Independence ever by word or deed dimmed the luster of the halo which encircles his name. May the future record of those who voted for this amendment be equally bright and lustrous."

This newspaper report, hastily written more than half a century ago, in the excitement and confusion of that great civic triumph, is moderate in its reference to the demonstrations which were led by distinguished members of Congress, many of whom standing upon their desks, cheered and shouted with wild delight like college boys at a crisis in an athletic struggle. Cabinet ministers, Supreme Court Justices, and members of the senate joined heartily in the demonstrations of approval, in which many women of distinction fittingly participated. When that patriotic tumult in the House was at its height there was heard the boom of cannon proclaiming to the greater multitude the unspeakable achievement for the nation and for humanity.

In the excitement that prevailed the able and skillful leader of this movement was not forgotten, but General Ashley could not be found to receive the ovation which members of the House and friends of the measure sought to bestow upon him, for immediately after the vote was taken he called a carriage and was the first to delight the heart of President Lincoln by announcing to him the great news and extending hearty congratulations upon the complete triumph of emancipation.

It will prove both interesting and instructive carefully to analyze the vote by which this important provision was made a part of the National Constitution. At the final vote on the 31st of January, 1865, when the amendment passed the House, every republican member of that body voted for it. Had every northern democratic member and every member from

the Border States voted against it the measure would have been defeated by 65 votes. It was an omni-partisan victory. To the solid republican vote there was added the votes of 17 northern democrats—8 from New York, 5 from Ohio, 2 from Pennsylvania, 1 from Connecticut, and 1 from Michigan. To these were added 19 votes by members from the Border States—7 from Missouri, 4 from Kentucky, 4 from Maryland, 3 from West Virginia, and 1 from Delaware. Four northern democrats who voted for the amendment on the 15th of June continued loyal to that record and were joined by 13 other northern democrats.

As stated upon a preceding page, at the beginning of the campaign for votes there was prepared by General Ashley a list of the names of members whose votes for the amendment it was thought possible by earnest efforts to secure. Of the 36 members thus selected, 24 voted for the measure, 2 were absent, and only 10 voted against it.

Judge Yeaman was not in error when in his letter of December 29th, hereinbefore set forth, he expressed his apprehension that his support of the amendment would cost him his political head in his district, for he never again held an elective office. And each one of the 24 northern democrats and Border State men who voted for the amendment was at that time the representative in Congress of a democratic district, as was the case with Judge Yeaman, and for that greatest act of his life he incurred the severe and permanent displeasure of his constituents. Not one of their number escaped. Not one ever afterwards held an elective office, and their punishment, though severe and cruel, was not unexpected, for in all our efforts to secure their votes for the amendment, we frankly admitted that by supporting the measure they probably would commit political suicide.

Due credit should be given to those who, by able, well-directed and persevering effort overcame such great difficulties and induced a sufficient number to make such sacrifices for a great cause, and undying honor should be given to those men

who were willing thus to march to their political graves in the service of their country and of the cause of human freedom.

And scarcely less honor is due the eight northern democrats who were absent when the vote was taken, of whom Mr. Blaine says, "It may be assumed that they assented to the amendment, but that they were not prepared to give it positive support."<sup>7</sup>

If four of those eight absentees had been present and voted in the negative it would have prevented the passage of the amendment. And to prevail upon them thus to remain away and refrain from voting was one of the most delicate and difficult of all the tasks of that campaign.

A striking and amusing contrast between an opponent and a supporter of the amendment was furnished by the declarations of two members of Congress while the measure was under consideration. When on the 8th of April, 1864, the senate passed the amendment, Senator Salisbury of Delaware, a zealous champion of slavery, arose and with great solemnity said: "I bid farewell to all hope for the restoration of the American Union." A few months after this ludicrous utterance Senator Salisbury saw the Union fully and permanently restored.

While the measure was under consideration in the House, Hon. Isaac N. Arnold of Illinois, with very impressive earnestness said: "In view of the long catalogue of wrongs which it has inflicted upon the country, I demand today the death of American slavery." And Mr. Arnold saw and participated in the execution of slavery.

On the evening of February 1st—the day following the passage of the amendment—President Lincoln in response to a serenade of congratulation, for the first time after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued, spoke of that measure as insufficient for the destruction of slavery. He had always been unequivocal in the declaration of his belief in the va-

<sup>7</sup> Twenty Years of Congress, Vol. I., p. 538.

lidity of that proclamation, and he never referred to its limitations until this Constitutional amendment was passed, when in that serenade speech he said: "He thought this measure was a very fitting if not an indispensable adjunct to the winding up of the great difficulty. He wished the reunion of all the states perfected, and so effected as to remove all causes of disturbance in the future; and, to attain this end, it was necessary that the original disturbing cause should, if possible, be rooted out. He thought all would bear him witness that he had never shrunk from doing all that he could to eradicate slavery, by issuing an Emancipation Proclamation. But that proclamation falls short of what the amendment will be when fully consummated. A question might be raised whether the proclamation was legally valid. It might be urged that it only aided those that came into our lines, and that it was inoperative as to those who did not give themselves up; or that it would have no effect upon the children of slaves born hereafter; in fact, it would be urged that it did not meet the evil. But this amendment is a king's cure-all for all evils." <sup>8</sup>

The ratification of the amendment by the several states was a proceeding of very great interest. Before the measure was for the second time brought before the House it had been taken up and thoroughly considered by the people throughout the country who, at the Presidential election in November, pronounced their verdict very emphatically in its favor. So intense had become the popular interest in the measure that immediately after it was passed by Congress there was lively competition among the states for priority of action in its ratification. Illinois—the President's home state—was the first to take such action. On the 1st of February—the first day after the amendment passed the House and only a few hours after that event—the legislature of that state voted for its ratification. Other states followed in rapid succession. Rhode Island and Michigan on February 2nd;

<sup>8</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 353.

Maryland, New York and West Virginia on the 3rd; Maine and Kansas on the 7th; Massachusetts and Pennsylvania on the 8th; Virginia on the 9th; Ohio and Missouri on the 10th; Indiana and Nevada on the 16th, and so on until before the end of that short month seventeen states had taken action ratifying the amendment. Before the end of the calendar year, on the 18th of December, Secretary Seward, who had remained in the Cabinet after President Lincoln's death, announced by proclamation that twenty-seven states, being three-fourths of the thirty-six states in the nation, had officially ratified the amendment which had thus been made a part of the National Constitution.

It is interesting to note that four slave states—Virginia, Louisiana, Tennessee and Arkansas—reconstructed under President Lincoln's direction and by his authority, were among the twenty-seven states constituting the three-fourths necessary to accomplish that ratification.

The Constitutional Amendment was as oil upon troubled waters in its influence upon the antislavery element of the nation. There were a few of the extreme radicals in Congress who seemed reluctant to forget that they had a chronic grudge against Mr. Lincoln because of his cautious and conservative movements against slavery and his great kindness and forbearance toward those who were in rebellion, but, although their fault-finding inclinations remained with them, they found little of which to complain. There was, however, one exception of which they promptly availed themselves. While the loyal states were all jubilant over the passage of the amendment, and the President's charming response to the serenade of congratulations, without any warning the nation was startled on the morning of February 3rd by the telegraphic announcement that the President was at Fortress Monroe to confer with Confederate commissioners respecting terms of peace. This gave the trouble-makers their last opportunity to pour the vials of wrath upon President Lincoln's devoted head.

A better spirit was shown by the extreme abolitionists, who seemed anxious to forget that they ever were out of harmony with the President and earnestly desired to atone for their past disapproval of the policies by which he had led them, and the nation, to the great antislavery consummation.

On the evening of the 4th of February, when the President had just returned from the Hampton Roads conference, before mentioned, William Lloyd Garrison, the leader and the greatest of the radical abolition element, at a large mass meeting in Boston said: "And to whom is the country more immediately indebted for this vital and saving amendment of the Constitution than, perhaps, to any other man? I believe I may confidently answer—to the humble railsplitter of Illinois—to the Presidential chain-breaker for millions of the oppressed—to Abraham Lincoln! (Immense and long-continued applause, ending with three cheers for the President.) I understand that it was by his wish and influence that that plank was made a part of the Baltimore platform; and taking his position unflinchingly upon that platform, the people have overwhelmingly sustained both him and it, in ushering in the year of jubilee."<sup>9</sup>

It does not detract from the merit or value of the efforts and achievements of others in securing the passage of this Constitutional Amendment to state that it was Abraham Lincoln who wrote that Article into the organic law of the nation. By his lifelong and consistent opposition to slavery, his clear, logical exposure of its injustice and wrong, his courageous demand for its restriction and "ultimate extinction," his wise and successful guidance of the movements that preceded and prepared the way for its downfall, his Proclamation of Emancipation and his early and hearty espousal of this Amendment, he is entitled to the designation by which he is known in all the world and by which he will evermore be remembered—The Emancipator!

<sup>9</sup> *The Liberator*, February 10th, 1865.



### MEMORIES

This fascinating picture is from a painting by Harry Roseland, by whose courtesy and that of Gerlach-Barklow Co., it is here reproduced.



## PART II

“ Whatever is remembered or whatever lost, we ought never to forget that Abraham Lincoln, one of the mightiest masters of statecraft that history has ever known, was also one of the most devoted and faithful servants of Almighty God who has ever sat in the high places of the world.”

—HON. JOHN HAY.



PRESIDENT LINCOLN DURING THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG  
 From a painting by Brisley for Dr. Ervin Chapman, and now in his collection.  
 (See page 383)



## I

### REMINISCENCES OF SECOND INAUGURATION

**T**HIS book had its inception at about one o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, March 4th, 1865, during the six minutes of my absorbing attention to the delivery of Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address. That my attention was absorbing is evidenced by the fact that on the following day I was astonished to discover that I could repeat the address in its entirety with almost verbal accuracy, although I had neither seen it in print nor exchanged one word with any person concerning it. But during its delivery it held me so transfixed and entranced that each one of its seven hundred and two magic words was imprinted upon my mind as is a photographic picture upon a highly sensitized plate. Equally vivid was the picture of the entire scene that stood out before me, the central heroic figure standing erect, with scarce a movement save the handling of his manuscript, the one unstudied swaying of his massive head, and the shifting of his shoulders as he uttered with rhythmic emphasis and distinct enunciation, the sentence which is most widely known and most devoutly cherished of all his classic sayings—"With malice toward none; with charity for all."

To have heard these words spoken by Abraham Lincoln upon the occasion which gave them their peculiar meaning was to experience an ecstatic wonderment which with recurrent movement ever since has filled my soul as they have been brought to recollection. Under the inspiration of that memorable inauguration and the wonderful inaugural address there took possession of my being a high purpose to give the world in abiding form, a record of the scenes I was witnessing,

and an account of some of the distinctive features of the life which at that time reached the zenith of early glory. That purpose for more than half a century has held its place, and now finds fruition in this volume which I hope may contribute to a better understanding of one of the most interesting and instructive characters in modern history.

The inauguration ceremonies were conducted upon a very large temporary platform constructed at the east front of the Capitol building, covering and extending far out beyond the broad marble stairs which lead up to the eastern entrance of the rotunda—the great circular room beneath the Capitol Dome. This platform was so inclined as to be fully exposed to view from every part of the east-front Capitol grounds, and was provided with seats for a large number of specially favored guests. The city was thronged with people from all parts of the country, each one intent upon witnessing the ceremonies to the best possible advantage. Being employed in the Capitol building I had excellent opportunities while the platform was being built to select the most desirable place for witnessing the inauguration ceremonies and hearing the inaugural address. My choice was made with deliberation and without difficulty, but to secure and hold the chosen position was not so easy. It was my first opportunity to attend a Presidential inauguration and I was determined to make the most of it. Therefore, in the drenching rain of that cold March morning, a few minutes before seven o'clock, I took my station about twenty feet from the platform and directly in front of where I knew the President would stand while delivering his address and receiving the oath of office. For more than an hour I was the only occupant of the space upon which before noon, according to estimates at the time, fifty thousand men and women were shivering in the drenching rain, and either crowding to gain better positions or stubbornly holding those they had secured.

The scene was so inspiring and my anticipations were so vivid that I did not experience the least discomfort during

the five hours of exposure to the cold precipitation which continued until twelve o'clock, and was followed by an hour of constant indications of further rain.

At noon, however, the storm ceased, and within thirty minutes the seats provided on the platform for invited guests were all occupied save those of the front section, which were reserved for the Presidential party and for invited guests who were attending the closing sessions of the two Houses of Congress, and witnessing the opening of the special session of the Senate called by the President. I was standing where I could see each one who came upon the platform, and I recognized among the number many of the nation's most distinguished citizens. While the multitude was gathering upon the platform and on the grounds, many famous bands contributed patriotic music, but the rain prevented the free and effective use of the fife and drum, at that time so essential to the fitting inspiration of such an assembly; and the sense of that lack lingered in the memory as an undefined yet real defect.

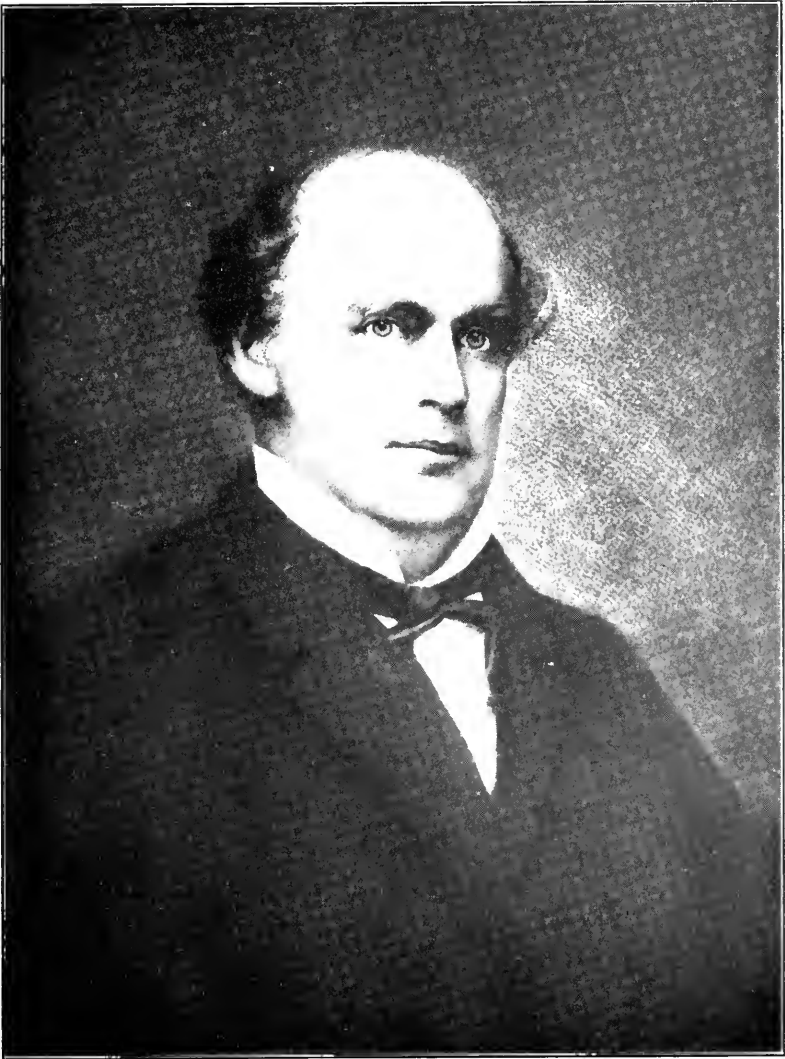
At twelve o'clock noon on that 4th of March, the thirty-eighth Congress of the United States ceased to exist and the strife and struggle of its closing activities were in tumultuous progress while the crowds were gathering outside to witness the inauguration. In the President's room near the senate chamber Mr. Lincoln was signing bills which had passed the two Houses of Congress and, immediately following the adjournment of Congress, the special session of the senate convened, and Andrew Johnson was inaugurated as Vice-President of the United States and President of the Senate. President Lincoln was in attendance upon these ceremonies and accompanied by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court immediately thereafter led the procession which passing out of the south door of the senate chamber proceeded through the long corridor to the great rotunda, and then turned east to the wide doorway opening out upon the inauguration platform.

It was nearly one o'clock when, from where I stood, there was seen a peculiar movement among the guards standing just outside those wide doors and between the magnificent Corinthian pillars of the Capitol. This indicated that the Presidential party was approaching, and in an instant the tumult was hushed to profound silence, and one could feel the waves of patriotic enthusiasm and devotion that swept over that immense assembly.

All eyes were turned to where the stalwart figures of the President and Chief Justice Chase were seen emerging through the wide door of the rotunda and advancing out upon the upper landing of the broad marble stairway and down the steps to the seats assigned them at the front and center of the great temporary platform. They were followed by the Justices of the United States Supreme Court, clothed in their long black official robes; members of the Cabinet and of both Houses of Congress; members of the diplomatic corps, each in the court costume of his country, and a large number of army and navy officers in brilliant uniform, together with many distinguished persons from all parts of the land.

The new Vice-President, Andrew Johnson, with Senator James R. Doolittle of Wisconsin, who accompanied him, were in the procession and were assigned seats at the front of the platform on the right of the President and the Chief Justice.

During all the morning and up to the time the Presidential party appeared there had not been a ray of sunshine, but just as President Lincoln stepped from beneath the shelter of the Capitol building, in front of the great eastern colonnade and out upon the platform, there was suddenly a wide opening in the thick black clouds above us, and the bright, glorious sunshine illuminated all the scene with ineffable splendor and beauty. The melancholy features of the President instantly became radiant with the joy we have since learned was awakened in his heart by the good omen from above; and the great waiting throng inspired by his coming and gladdened by that omen, greeted the sunburst with re-



CHIEF JUSTICE SALMON PORTLAND CHASE

who, on the 4th of March, 1865, administered the oath of office to President Abraham Lincoln.



ligious and patriotic fervor and enthusiasm. On the next day in greeting an esteemed caller, the President said: "Was not that burst of sunshine glorious? It made my heart jump."

The entrance of that large company of distinguished people and their distribution on the platform was a thrillingly imposing pageant. If they had gathered from different points and at intervals as the multitude had assembled upon the campus the spectacle would have been less graphic. But they all came pouring out at the same point and advanced with steady movement down to their respective stations. It seemed that the great rotunda from which they came was an arena in which the stalwart champions of human interests had been engaged in furious and successful combat with their enemies and from which they were marching out to receive the plaudits of the people.

In the personnel of its participants that pageant was never equalled in our nation's history. At other times there have been greater numbers in the procession, but on no other occasion has there been such a moving company of men and women of such high and heroic mold. The long struggles against slavery and the four years of war had engaged the efforts of people of the highest type who, by their warfare on behalf of freedom and human rights, had been developed to heroic measurements. No other administration and no Congress in our history contained so large a percentage of members of extraordinary character and talent as the nation had at that time. And they looked the part, never appearing to better advantage than when moving in that picturesque procession or massed upon that platform.

It was peculiarly fitting that that advancing column should be headed by the two men most fully typical of the two classes of high-grade American citizenship. The Chief Justice was at that time without a peer as a type of the best results of careful and wise breeding and thorough educational development and training. Descended from long lines of able and distinguished ancestors he was early recognized as worthy

of his lineage and was put in training for high distinction. In personal appearance and bearing he was majestic, tall, well formed, with massive head, and features indicative of great intellectual endowments and force of character. He was a finished product of the best New England stock and was generally regarded as unexcelled in the qualities thus produced.

But he was outclassed by the man who marched beside him in that inaugural procession. Chase was great, Lincoln was peerless. Chase was erect and dignified; Lincoln towered above him, too great for any touch of self-conscious mannerism. The features of Chase were like carved and polished marble; those of Lincoln were like deeply chiselled granite, roughened by the storm and tempest. Chase marched with precise and measured tread. Lincoln stepped along the way like a trained athlete whose well developed and supple muscles are like those of the graceful monarch of the jungle. In the appearance and movements of Chase his high class and cultured ancestry reappeared; Lincoln's giant frame and magnetic personality were the embodiment of an elect company of forebears developed, cultured and trained in the struggles of early frontier life, and in the spell which his presence cast upon all who saw him were revealed potentialities which were more than human. There were counterparts of Chase in some of the distinguished men upon the platform, and here and there were men who resembled Lincoln,

"Men of mould,  
Well embodied, well ensouled,"

as Emerson aptly says.

From the moment he appeared leading that procession, my whole being was engaged in the study of Abraham Lincoln. After he was seated, and while the members of the Presidential party were being assigned their stations, my opportunities to study the great leader were better than I had before enjoyed. He was sitting only a few feet from

the place where I was standing with his face turned in that direction, his uncovered head and rugged features illuminated by the bright and benignant sunshine. He appeared perfectly at ease, giving no heed to what was before or around him, and without the least indication of nervous tension or agitation. His head was not wholly erect as during the years of his titanic struggles in Illinois, but was slightly bowed as in meditation, and his massive shoulders were bent as with a great burden, giving the appearance of great strength and power of endurance. His eyes had a far-away, dreamy look, and there was not the slightest movement of the hand, head or features from the time he took his seat until he arose to speak. The great multitude was in a tumult of enthusiasm, but he seemed unconscious of their display of admiration and loyalty, being intent on matters of great magnitude and moment. During the six years immediately preceding that inauguration I had given much attention to the study of Abraham Lincoln. I had seen him upon other important occasions and had been with him until I thought I had formed an approximately accurate estimate of his dimensions, but never until I stood before him on that memorable 4th of March did I realize the immense power of his personality and his measureless reserve force.

His silence was eloquent; his meditation audible; his tranquillity dynamic; his repose instinct with action, and his solemn melancholy sparkled with humor and good cheer. From his tremendous personality there flowed currents of mystic power that were resistless in their influence upon the convictions and purposes of those about him. My sensitive nature responded to those waves of magnetic force while in rapturous bewilderment I sought to discover the secret of his greatness, and I was unconsciously lifted to a higher level of purpose by a silent influence which I felt but could not understand. Never after those moments of apocalyptic vision was I the same as I had been before. The time was too brief for further reflections, for soon all were seated,

and without a signal or word of introduction Mr. Lincoln arose and advanced close to the railing, as near as possible to the great throng before him, with his right hand touching the table by his side and his left hand holding his manuscript. Thus he stood in silence while cheers and shouts seemed to rend the heavens with their volume and intensity. I had been in vast and enthusiastic gatherings before that day, but never had I heard anything so suggestive of the expression, "a sound like the voice of many waters," as were the salvos of applause that greeted President Lincoln as he stood before that throng.

There were thousands in that cheering crowd whose chief desire was not so much to witness the inaugural pageantry as to see and hear the President, and to express their patriotic loyalty by their presence and their enthusiastic demonstrations. They could see their hero who stood in plain view of each one, with his great wealth of coal black hair and long black coat forming a becoming framework for his strong, swarthy face, but many of them were late in coming, and unfortunately were compelled to take positions so far from the platform that they had no expectation of being able to hear a word of the inaugural address. Therefore, the continuance of the deafening applause was not as objectionable to them as it was to those of us who had secured positions near the platform.

There was no signal for silence from the President, no lifting of the hand or other movement, but an invisible influence from the silent and fixed figure before them soon hushed the multitude to a profound silence which became oppressive while the President delayed the beginning of his address. Then the first two words he uttered flew like a flaming dart out over the astonished people. What he said was startling because it was unique and utterly unexpected. Those first two words thrilled me through and through like recurrent waves of electricity, and upon others also, as I have learned, their influence was the same. In his first inaugural address,

Mr. Lincoln began with the customary words, "Fellow Citizens"; but the long and bloody struggle of the war had caused the people to become more to the great-hearted chieftain than is signified by those almost hackneyed words, therefore, in this the greatest of all his state papers and addresses, by divine inspiration, as I believe, Mr. Lincoln revealed the strength and tenderness of his affection for the people by saying, "Fellow Countrymen!"

But far more thrilling than the words themselves was the remarkable manner in which they were spoken. Abraham Lincoln was probably the only man then in public life who would have uttered those words in such a fashion. Any other man in all probability would have begun his address in tones heard by only a limited number of that great company, and would have increased the volume of his voice as he proceeded; and it is not likely that more than one-third of that large number of eager listeners would have been able distinctly to hear one word of his address. Mr. Lincoln was not like the minister who, when asked how he prepared his sermons, replied, "I regard my sermons as a work of art, and I prepare and deliver them accordingly"; but was rather like another minister, who answered the same question by saying: "I regard my sermons as I do my fishing tackle, and I think only of the fish I hope to catch."

Always ardently in love with the people, Mr. Lincoln earnestly endeavored to have every word of his address heard by all who were present. His long experience upon the stump had taught him that the man whom it was most important for him to reach and influence—the man not fully in sympathy with him—was the one sitting or standing farthest back in the audience. He had also learned that the words distinctly heard and understood by that man would certainly be heard by all others in the audience. Other public speakers also knew this, but Mr. Lincoln acted upon it; therefore, in delivering his inaugural address, after a very impressive pause, he thrilled and delighted every one by uttering those two

introductory words in a voice so strong and clear as to be distinctly heard by those who were most distant from him. Instantly, hundreds of voices from all parts of the most distant sections of that enormous throng responded by shouting, "Good, good!" in tones expressive of their surprise and joy at being able to hear those words so plainly. "Good," indeed it was! No other word could so well express their joy, and that monosyllable was quite sufficient. It told the story of their delight at being rewarded for their long and expensive journeys to Washington by being able to hear the inaugural address as delivered by the man whom they held in highest admiration and affection.

The President seemed equally surprised by the prompt and hearty response to his salutation, as the people had been by his words and manner, and he stood in silence for a moment before continuing his address. Then upon the same high key, with voice as clear as the tones of a silver trumpet, he proceeded deliberately to declare his great message to mankind. There was not the least display of special effort to be heard, though not a word of that address failed to reach every one of that listening assembly. I was then a young man with high ambition to become, if possible, an effective public speaker. For that I had by the aid of books and schools made careful and thorough preparation and I had heard the master orators of the day. But my best instruction in the art of public discourse was received during the six minutes occupied by the delivery of Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address. There was no effort at oratorical display, no endeavor to be impressive, not the slightest mannerism of any kind whatsoever. Mr. Lincoln seemed to have no thought of his address as "a work of art," or other than a message of Jehovah to His chastened and suffering people to whom He was about to give redemption and deliverance. His whole manner was calculated to elicit and hold that rapt attention with which the people listened to his message. And he seemed to desire and expect just what his hearers so plentifully gave.

Only once was he interrupted by applause, and that came most unexpectedly at the close of a peculiarly significant statement and gave solemn emphasis to the next very brief sentence.

Speaking of conditions in the nation four years before he said: "Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish." So tense had the feelings of the audience become that at the close of that sentence a storm of applause burst forth from all the throng and continued for a considerable time with very great force. The President, though seemingly surprised, was undisturbed by the interruption, and when the applause ceased he very deliberately and with most impressive solemnity uttered the four words of the next sentence, "And the war came." There were tears in the tone in which those words were spoken which touched the hearts of those who heard him, and prepared them to listen in silence to the succeeding portions of the address.

A little later in the address the people were moved as standing grain at harvest time is swayed by the evening breeze, but there was no demonstration, for the impression was too deep and too peculiar to be fittingly expressed. My own experiences were probably like those of others, and when he said, "It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces," my hands involuntarily were clinched in righteous indignation, which instantly vanished when he added, "But let us judge not that we be not judged." Considered in connection with Mr. Lincoln's conception of the character of slavery, together with his life struggles and hardships which preceded that day, and the awful experiences and desolation of four years of war, which was even then in progress, the spirit manifested by the quotation of the Saviour's words was never surpassed by any save the incarnate Son of God.

Never did I listen to a discourse which at the time it was being delivered seemed more impressively religious than did that inaugural address. It seemed like a very instructive and helpful sermon on law and gospel, greatly enriched and strengthened by appropriate passages of Scripture, clearly and correctly interpreted and most fittingly applied. It caused all the subsequent inauguration ceremonies to be pervaded by a religious atmosphere and gave great significance to the use of the Bible in administering the oath of office. Four times did Mr. Lincoln quote from the Scriptures while delivering that address, twice from the Old Testament—from Genesis and the Psalms—and twice from the words of Jesus as recorded by Matthew. Of the seven hundred and two words in that address, two hundred and sixty-six—more than one-third—were quoted verbatim from the Word of God, or were employed in expounding and applying the quoted passages. And never were passages of Scripture more aptly quoted nor more fittingly applied. I had for years been a diligent Bible student, but never until that day did I realize the tremendous meaning of the Saviour's words: "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." Mr. Lincoln's interpretation of that passage as teaching the great law of divine retribution made a most profound and salutary impression upon those who heard it, and ever since it has grown in significance and force. It was a truth upon which he had pondered long and earnestly. A declaration of that truth was the most striking feature of his interview with Dr. Newton Bateman in 1860, and was repeated in various forms many times during succeeding years. Eleven months before his second inauguration Mr. Lincoln stated that truth in his Hodges-Bramlette letter, in language almost identical with that employed in the inaugural address. In his letter to Thurlow Weed, written eleven days after the inauguration, he indicated that he regarded his declaration of the law of retribution as taught in the words of Jesus

as the distinguishing feature of his address. And while he believed that his reference to that divine law caused his inaugural address to be as he said, "not immediately popular," at the same time he confidently added: "It is a truth which I thought needed to be told, and as whatever of humiliation there is in it falls most directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it." So important did Mr. Lincoln regard the enunciation of that truth upon that occasion that he referred to it a second time as follows: "Fondly do we hope—ferverently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

I was more deeply impressed by that passage than by any other portion of the address, and the same was evidently the case with many others. I was thrilled by its poetic beauty, and melted by its humble and submissive spirit. I still doubt if there can be found in literature a passage that surpasses it in startling and graphic imagery and in dynamic force. At one and the same time it reveals the yearning heart of hope, the uplifted eye of prayer, the listening ear of conscious guilt, the voice of righteous divine judgment and the bowed head of penitence. Its language is chaste, and moves gracefully along the high level of the inspired Word which it quotes as its climax with faultless fitness.

It is now more than half a century since I heard that inaugural address, and from that day to the present, when I hear or read the 19th Psalm, I have a vivid recollection of seeing the form of Abraham Lincoln standing in the illuminating light of that sunny afternoon and hearing him say, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." Early in life I memorized that Psalm and for many

years, upon the flying train, in the bustling throng, when overworked, weary and wakeful at night, or when the tension of pain, sorrow, or anxiety seemed to require relaxation, I have repeated that peculiarly precious portion of God's Word, but I never reach that passage without pausing and lingering in remembrance upon the time when I heard those words spoken by Abraham Lincoln.

As the last word of the address was spoken the audience responded with very hearty applause, and the President calmly turned to the Chief Justice, who promptly arose, and advancing received from the Clerk of the Supreme Court a copy of the Bible which had been provided for the occasion. The applause instantly ceased and there was deep and impressive silence in all the company during that solemn ceremony. The Chief Justice, holding the Bible in his left hand, raised his right hand, and the President with his right hand lifted in like manner placed his left hand reverently upon the open Volume, and the two great men stood face to face each looking steadily into the other's eye, while the President repeated the oath of office, sentence by sentence, after the words were spoken by the Chief Justice.

The scene was impressive beyond all possible description. The background of the picture was significant, the great audience of distinguished guests on the inclined platform extended back to the colonnade of the magnificent white Capitol building, with the Goddess of Liberty standing upon the summit of the high dome and then for the first time looking down upon a Presidential inauguration; with all eyes turned upon the two strong figures standing motionless at the front of the platform, the whole scene bathed in glorious sunshine, and the deep and solemn silence broken only by the voices of the two men as they responsively repeated the oath of office required by the Constitution of the nation. Mr. Lincoln's voice was in marked contrast with that of the Chief Justice; the latter, although speaking in tones of wonderful depth and volume, was heard by only a limited number, while



BIBLE ON WHICH LINCOLN TOOK OATH OF OFFICE



the former repeating after him in clear and ringing tones the sentences of the oath sent his voice far out to the most distant listeners.

When with special emphasis he had uttered the concluding words—"So help me God"—Mr. Lincoln reverently bowed his head, and fervently kissed the Bible; and as he did so his lips touched the 27th and 28th verses of the fifth chapter of Isaiah, which read as follows: "None shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken: Whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind."

The copy of the Bible containing those verses, marked by the Chief Justice, was on the following day given by him to Mrs. Lincoln; but the most diligent search, extending over a period of many years, has failed to find it. As Mr. Lincoln uttered the last word of his official oath the booming of cannon announced to the world that the exercises of the day had been brought to a successful close, and that the new administration had been ushered in.

At that point there occurred an event which I believe has never been mentioned in any published account of this inauguration. Many histories of those times make mention of Andrew Johnson's intoxication at the time he received in the senate chamber the oath of office as Vice-President, just before the Presidential inauguration; but they contain no account of his connection with an episode which followed the taking of the oath of office by President Lincoln. I can understand this omission only by supposing that those who have given accounts of these inaugural proceedings if present at the time were sitting upon the platform with the invited guests and did not witness the incident. But, as already stated, I was standing directly in front of the platform, only a few feet from where the ceremonies were being conducted, and I saw all that I am here stating. Just as President Lincoln

turned from kissing the Bible there arose from the audience before him an almost terrific call for Andrew Johnson, "Andy, Andy, speech, speech!" was the cry of the multitude, and Mr. Lincoln, who, a little time before, had seen the disgraceful proceedings in the senate, advanced to the platform railing with nervous haste, and with dramatic earnestness shook his head commandingly to the tempestuous throng. But there was little abatement of the call for Johnson, whose torrid temperament and violent denunciation of treason and rebellion had made him a popular idol, and when President Lincoln, after shaking his head, waved a salutation to the audience and turned to depart, the call for the new Vice-President was renewed with increased volume and violence.

For a time Mr. Johnson gave no heed to this call, but he finally arose and came forward with the evident purpose of speaking. In manifest bewilderment he stood for a moment in silence, and then covering his eyes with his right hand stood motionless as if trying to collect his thoughts. His face was flushed and seemed slightly swollen, and many voices in the audience were heard saying, "He is sick! He is sick! He cannot speak!" And before he could gain command of his great resources his devoted friend, Senator Doolittle, hastily advanced, and taking his arm conducted him into the retiring procession, up the steps into the rotunda. I had not a thought, and heard no intimation, that the affair had any undesirable significance. I knew that it was not a time for any proceedings not connected with the inaugural ceremonies, and I supposed that what President Lincoln did in disapproving of the call for Johnson was on that account. I heard no reference to the matter at the time, and as I left Washington that evening for a visit to my Ohio home, it was several days before I learned of Mr. Johnson's unfortunate condition upon that occasion.

Andrew Johnson, though addicted to the habitual use of intoxicating liquors, was not a drunkard, as his condition that day seemed to indicate. He was often very considerably

Supreme Court of the United States.

I, William H. Carroll, Clerk of  
the said Court do hereby certify  
that the preceding copy of the Holy  
Bible is that upon which the Hon.ble  
R. B. Taney, Chief Justice of said  
Court, administered to this Exequity,  
Abraham Lincoln, the 11th of  
Office as President of the United  
States, on the day of the date hereof  
at the Capitol of the United States  
in the City of Washington  
and District of Columbia  
having the Seal of the National  
Government of the said United  
States) —

In testimony whereof I  
hereunto subscribe my name  
and affix the Seal of the said  
Supreme Court this 4th day of  
March A.D. 1861.



Wm H Carroll  
Clerk of the Sup. Court U.S.

These cuts of the Bible and of the Court's Certificate are from photographs presented to the author by Hon. Robert T. Lincoln for publication in this work.



under the influence of liquor, but I never learned of his being at any other time as nearly maudlin drunk as upon that occasion. For some weeks preceding that day Mr. Johnson had been ill with ague at his home in Tennessee and was weak and nervous when he arrived at the Vice-President's room in the Capitol building for his induction into office. Stating his condition to the retiring Vice-President, Hannibal Hamlin, he asked for a glass of brandy, which Mr. Hamlin by sending out secured. According to Mr. Hamlin's statement, Mr. Johnson drank about one-third of the brandy at once, and a little later a like amount, and finally took the remainder in the glass as they passed out of the room to the senate chamber. A considerable amount of time was occupied by the proceedings in the senate before the oath of office was administered to the newly elected Vice-President, and when Mr. Johnson arose to speak he was thoroughly befuddled; and instead of giving the able and dignified address he was rightfully expected to deliver he compelled that large assembly of the world's able and distinguished representatives to listen for an extended period to his senseless and incoherent gibberish. It was an unspeakably pitiful and humiliating spectacle. Mr. Johnson had risen from ignorance, poverty and obscurity by his own heroic and persistent efforts until he had attained nation-wide distinction, and had been chosen by his loyal countrymen to the second office in the nation. He had stood heroically for right and honor and had courageously denounced treason and rebellion with unsparing severity and effectiveness. And on that fateful 4th of March he stood triumphant at the zenith of his highest known aspirations, enshrined in the affections of the nation and with every prospect of a distinguished future career. But from that eminence he fell; fell ignobly, fell by his own folly never again to rise to the heights of esteem and honor upon which he stood when he walked into that senate chamber which for years had been the arena of his contests with the forces of disloyalty. He fell just as he had reached the high

station from which he was destined very soon to pass into the most exalted position of authority in the world, as successor to Abraham Lincoln in the office of chief magistrate of the United States. And in falling he lost the popular esteem and confidence which would have been of priceless value in aiding him successfully to meet the requirements of that position. He fell because he voluntarily invited that disaster.

A little boy when told that he had fallen out of bed because he had lain too near where he got in, promptly replied, "No, I fell out of bed because I laid too near where I fell out." Andrew Johnson fell because he walked too near the precipice over which he made that headlong plunge. He was not drunk because he was a habitual drunkard, for that he was not; but because he was a habitual "moderate drinker." Had he been a total abstainer, as was Abraham Lincoln, and as was his noble and worthy predecessor, Hannibal Hamlin, the nation would not have been humiliated in the eyes of the world as it never had been before by the unseemly and ill-timed exhibition of ignoble weakness on the part of one of its most distinguished representatives.

So exasperated was President Lincoln by the incident that as he was passing out of the senate chamber he said to those in charge of the inaugural proceedings: "Do not permit Johnson to speak a word during the exercises that are now to follow."

One feature of that inauguration which afforded Mr. Lincoln special delight was the large attendance of colored people, and the presence of a company of colored soldiers as a military guard. Nothing of the kind had ever before occurred, and it was at that time especially suitable because it was not only, as already stated, the first Presidential inauguration beneath the great bronze statue of the Goddess of Liberty, but it was also the first Presidential inauguration of the nation free from slavery.

During the afternoon of that day I saw groups of people

at several widely separated points in the city all gazing toward the heavens, and at length I, too, paused and looked, and to my unspeakable surprise I saw a bright and beautiful star shining with undimmed splendor in close proximity to the unclouded king of day. It was about three o'clock, and the star was at the point which the sun had seemed to occupy about one hour before. I have never heard of any scientific explanation of this strange phenomenon, but I could not refrain from regarding it, as did many others who saw it, as an omen of good. It has been stated that President Lincoln and his attendants saw the star as they were returning from the Capitol to the White House, and that it gave the President great delight, as did the welcome sunburst at the inauguration. If not an omen from above that star was a beautiful and gladsome symbol of the star of hope which on that good day shone with celestial splendor in the hearts of the loyal people of the nation.

Mr. Lincoln's second inaugural address was prepared by him with painstaking care, and has come to be regarded not only as his literary masterpiece, but as a state paper unexcelled in all human history. From that noonday hour of rifting clouds and dazzling sunshine, on through the starlit afternoon that followed, and down to the present time, that address has steadily advanced in public favor, and in critical appreciation. No one ever has suggested for that address the addition or subtraction of a single word. It seems to be a faultless composite with each of its component parts fully disclosed; and no one is able to show that any one part is dominant. Its rhetoric is perfect; its history is full and complete; its statecraft is profound and far-seeing, and in every part it is illuminated by fitly chosen gems of sacred truth. With exalted majesty it proclaims the sovereignty of God and His inexorable law of righteous retribution, and with pathetic penitence bears witness that His judgments "are true and righteous altogether." In the submissive spirit of Gethsemane it holds up the rod of intercession and dazzles hu-

manity with its reflection of the celestial glory of the Cross by its "malice toward none" and its "charity for all." If not as pleasing as the Gettysburg address it is far greater and more lastingly impressive and potential. It is more than a masterpiece; it is an unclassed state paper and a literary solitaire. Dr. J. G. Holland declares that the address is "a paper whose Christian sentiments and whose reverent and pious spirit has no parallel among the state papers of the American Presidents."

Hon. Isaac N. Arnold referring to it says: "Since the days of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, where is the speech of emperor, king or ruler which can compare with this? May we not without irreverence say that passages of this address are worthy of that Holy Book which daily he read and from which during his long days of toil he had drawn inspiration and guidance? Where else but from the teachings of the Son of God could he have drawn that Christian charity which pervades the last sentence in which he so unconsciously describes his own moral nature: 'with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right.' No other state paper in American annals, not even Washington's farewell address, has made so deep an impression upon the people as this. This paper in its solemn recognition of the justice of Almighty God reminds us of the words of the old Hebrew prophets."

Mr. Arnold also tells us that a distinguished divine, after hearing the address, said: "The President's inaugural is the finest state paper in all history." He also informs us that a distinguished New York statesman hearing this declaration replied: "Yes, and as Washington's name grows brighter with time, so it will be with Lincoln. A century from today that inaugural will be read as one of the most sublime utterances ever spoken by man."

Hon. Charles Sumner, who was always reserved and temperate in his commendation, said: "The inaugural address which signalized" President Lincoln's "entry for a second

time upon his great duties was briefer than any similar address in our history; but it has already gone farther, and will live longer than any other. It was a continuation of the Gettysburg speech, with the same sublimity and gentleness. Its concluding words were like an angelic benediction."

Carl Schurz, in "The Writings of Abraham Lincoln," Vol. I., p. 67, says: "Lincoln's famous 'Gettysburg Speech' has been much and justly admired. But far greater, as well as far more characteristic, was that inaugural in which he poured out the whole devotion and tenderness of his great soul. It had all the solemnity of a father's last admonition and blessing to his children before he lay down to die." It "was like a sacred poem. No American President had ever spoken words like these to the American people. America never had a President who found such words in the depth of his heart."

Former President R. B. Hayes, in September, 1878, said: "No statement of the true objects of the war more complete than this has ever been made. It includes them all—Nationality, Liberty, Equal Rights and Self-government. These are the principles for which the Union soldier fought, and which it was his aim to maintain and to perpetuate."

We have assurance that the address "was read in Europe with the most profound attention." The *London Times* said: "It is the most sublime state paper of the century."

Concerning it the *London Spectator* said: "We cannot read it without a renewed conviction that it is the noblest political document known to history, and should have for the nation and the statesmen he left behind him something of a sacred and almost prophetic character. Surely, none was ever written under a stronger sense of the reality of God's government. And certainly none written in a period of passionate conflict ever so completely excluded the partiality of victorious faction, and breathed so pure a strain of mingled justice and mercy."

Mr. Lincoln was always exceedingly reticent respecting

any of his own speeches or literary productions. I cannot call to recollection one instance of his speaking in any degree of commendation concerning any of his speeches or writings save in his brief and modest statement to Thurlow Weed in a letter written eleven days after this address was delivered, in which he expresses his expectation that it will "wear as well as—perhaps better than—anything I have produced." All of which tends to show that the man was even greater than his words.

## II

### LINCOLN'S RELIGIOUS FAITH

**F**IRST of all was Abraham Lincoln's marvelous faith in the Bible. Upon that faith as a foundation was built his entire personal superstructure. With that faith as an inspiration all his attitudes and activities were chosen and maintained. "Marvelous" is not too strong a word to use in designating his relation to the sacred Book. The Bible was to him the touchstone by which his judgment on every question was determined. In all his business affairs, in his professional pursuits, in his political affiliations, and in his personal aspirations and endeavors, it was his constant guide. "Owe no man anything but to love one another," was a rule which he sought to obey, not because it was convenient but because it was a Bible admonition. Whatever was condemned by the Bible he stubbornly opposed. Whatever the Bible commended, he heartily approved, steadfastly defended and sought to promote.

Abraham Lincoln first learned to read by slowly tracing the lines of chosen passages of Scripture under his mother's prayerful tuition. That tutelage was painstaking and devout, leaving in his memory sweet and sacred impressions which time could not erase.

"Mrs. Lincoln possessed but one book in the world, the Bible," says Mrs. Trevena Jackson, "and from this book she taught her children daily. Abraham had been to school for two or three months, to such a school as the rude country afforded. Of quick mind and retentive memory, he soon came to know the Bible well-nigh by heart, and to look upon his

gentle teacher as the embodiment of all the good precepts in the book.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus from childhood he was Bible-bred and the Word of God was transmuted into his being and became the determining influence in his moral development. He believed that Word as implicitly as he believed in his own existence.

Some of his associates in his early manhood were pronounced skeptics and rejected the claims and teachings of the Scriptures, and during all his later years, even to the close of his life, he was in close professional and official relations and fellowship with men who openly denied the authenticity and divine inspiration of the Bible; but voluminous as are his published addresses and writings, they do not contain a single criticism of the Scriptures nor any word calculated to weaken their hold upon human esteem and confidence. And no one worthy to give trustworthy testimony upon this subject has yet arisen to disprove that assertion. Never flippantly nor in jest, but always with solemn and impressive reverence did he quote from the sacred Book.

He regarded the declarations of Scripture as conclusive on any matter under consideration. Not a doubt of its authenticity or validity did he ever express or manifest, nor did he weaken its force by recognizing the possibility of doubt in the minds of others. It is both interesting and instructive to note the absolute confidence with which he applied the declarations of Scripture to the settlement of every question in dispute. The Bible was to him the court of last resort and his appeals to its teachings were always made with a manifest expectation that its verdict would be accepted as final.

During the early fifties, Mr. Lincoln bestowed much thought upon religious subjects. Under the very able instruction of Rev. James Smith, D.D., pastor of the first Presbyterian Church of Springfield, he was aided in reaching a very satisfactory and settled conclusion in favor of the

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln's use of the Bible, p. 7.

authenticity and divine inspiration of the Bible. During those years, probably in 1850, he was invited to deliver a lecture in the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, under the auspices of the Bible Society of that city. The purpose of this lecture was to aid in an effort which at that time was being put forth to place a copy of the Holy Scriptures in every family in the state. To assist in that movement Mr. Lincoln delivered a very able and forceful address, at the conclusion of which he said: "It seems to me that nothing short of infinite wisdom could by any possibility have devised and given to man this excellent and perfect moral code. It is suited to men in all conditions of life, and includes all the duties they owe to their Creator, to themselves, and to their fellowmen."<sup>2</sup>

Robert Browne, M. D., who was for many years on terms of intimacy with Mr. Lincoln and shared a degree of his confidence which was given to few men, in his excellent life of Lincoln, has this to say:

In speaking of Paine's "Age of Reason," he laid it aside, saying: "I have looked through it, carelessly it is true; but there is nothing to such books. God rules this world, and out of seeming contradictions, that all these kind of reasoners seem unable to understand, He will develop and disclose His plans for men's welfare in His inscrutable way. Not all of Paine's nor all the French distempered stuff will make a man better, but worse. They might lay down tons and heaps of their heartless reasonings alongside a few of Christ's sayings and parables, to find that He had said more for the benefit of our race in one of them than there is in all they have written. They might read His Sermon on the Mount to learn that there is more of justice, righteousness, kindness and mercy in it than in the minds and books of all the ignorant doubters from the beginning of human knowledge."<sup>3</sup>

During his conference with Hon. L. E. Chittenden,

<sup>2</sup> *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1873, p. 338.

<sup>3</sup> *Abraham Lincoln and Men of his Time*, Vol. II., p. 426.

Register of the Treasury, respecting the resignation of Secretary Salmon P. Chase, and the appointment of his successor, Mr. Lincoln said:

"The character of the Bible is easily established, at least to my satisfaction. We have to believe many things which we do not comprehend. The Bible is the only one that claims to be God's book—to comprise His law—His history. It contains an immense amount of evidence of its own authenticity. It describes a governor omnipotent enough to operate this great machine, and declares that He made it. It states other facts which we fully do not comprehend, but which we cannot account for. What shall we do with them?

"Now let us treat the Bible fairly. If we had a witness on the stand whose general story we knew was true, we would believe him when he asserted facts of which we had no other evidence. We ought to treat the Bible with equal fairness. I decided a long time ago that it was less difficult to believe that the Bible was what it claimed to be than to disbelieve it. It is a good Book for us to obey; it contains the ten commandments, the golden rule, and many other rules which ought to be followed. No man was ever the worse for living according to the directions of the Bible."

"I could not press inquiry further," says Mr. Chittenden. "I knew that Mr. Lincoln was no hypocrite. There was an air of such sincerity in his manner of speaking, and especially in his references to the Almighty, that no one could have doubted his faith unless the doubter believed him dishonest.

"Further comment cannot be necessary. Abraham Lincoln accepted the Bible as the inspired Word of God—he believed and faithfully endeavored to live according to the fundamental principles and doctrines of the Christian faith. To doubt either proposition is to be untrue to his memory, a disloyalty of which no American should be guilty." <sup>4</sup>

And it was not a mutilated Bible in which Abraham Lincoln so confidently believed. It was the complete volume of

<sup>4</sup> Recollections of President Lincoln, pp. 448-451.



~~Beaver and man are almost human, but~~  
~~the beaver is almost man, and man is~~  
~~the first of beaver, years ago. Only one be~~  
~~may be, living up the winter, and, of pa~~  
~~vious, but they do so, so many better, or~~  
~~less laboring, than they do in the case~~  
~~of man.~~ Man is not the only animal  
who labors, but he is the only one who im-  
proves his workmanship. This improvement,  
he effects by discovering, and inventions. His  
first important discovery was, the fact that  
he was naked, and his first invention was  
the fig leaf apron. This simple article, the ap-  
ron—made of leaves, seems to have been the  
origin of clothing—the one thing for which  
nearly half of the toil and cost of the hu-  
man race has, ever since been expended—  
The most important improvement ever made in  
connection with clothing, was the invention of  
spinning, and weaving. The spinning jenny, and  
power loom, invaluable in modern times, though great  
improvements, do not, as inventions, rank with the  
ancient arts of spinning, and weaving. Spinning  
and weaving brought into the department of clothing  
such abundance and variety of materials—  
Wool, the hair of various species of animals, hemp,  
flax, cotton, silk, and perhaps others, were  
all suited to it, affording garments not  
only adapted to wet and dry, heat and  
cold, but also susceptible of high degrees of  
ornamentous finish. Exactly when, or where spin-  
ning and weaving originated is <sup>not</sup> known. At  
the first interview of the Almighty with Adam and  
Eve, after the fall, He made "coats of skins, and  
clothed them" Gen. 3-21.

#### DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS

Facsimile of first page of the lecture supposed to have been lost. From  
photographs of the original manuscript now owned by Hon. Henry C.  
Melvin, Justice of the Supreme Court of California.

The Bible makes no other allusion to clothing, before the flood - soon after the deluge Noah's two sons covered him with a garment; but of what material the garment was made is not mentioned - Gen. 9. 23.

Abraham mentions "linen" in such connection as to indicate that spinning and weaving were in use in his day - Gen. 14. 23 - and soon after, reference to linen is frequently made - "linen breeches, are mentioned, Exod. 28. 42 - and it is said "all the women that were wise, <sup>heartily</sup> did spin with their hands," <sup>(35-35)</sup> and, "all the women <sup>above</sup> that heartily spun them up in wisdom, spun goats hair (35-35) The work of the "weaver" is mentioned - (35-35) . In the book of Job, a very old book, date not exactly known, the "weaver's shuttle" is mentioned -

The above mention of "linen" by Abraham is the oldest recorded allusion to spinning and weaving; and it was (now) about two thousand years after the creation of man, and now near four thousand years ago - Profane authors think there is one generation in Egypt; and this is not contradictory or made improbable, by any thing in the Bible; for the allusion of Abraham, mentioned, was not made until after he had sojourned in Egypt -

The discovery of the properties of iron, and the making of iron tools, must have been among the earliest of important discoveries and inventions - We can scarcely conceive the possibility of making much of anything else, without the use of iron tools - Indeed, an iron hammer must have been very much needed to make the first iron hammer with.

A stone probably served as a substitute - Whom could the "gopher wood" for the ark, have been



thirty-nine Old Testament books from which the Saviour quoted and to which He referred when He said "Search the Scriptures," together with the twenty-seven New Testament books; it was the entire Bible, as commonly understood. All this with unquestioning confidence he accepted and quoted as divine revelation.

Many have erroneously supposed that the lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions," which Mr. Lincoln prepared and delivered in 1859-60, was not preserved. Fortunately, the manuscript of that lecture was among the effects which Mr. Lincoln left in a satchel with Mrs. Grimsley at Springfield, a few days before his departure for Washington to be inaugurated as President, and it has been carefully kept and is still in excellent condition.

After Mr. Lincoln's death the satchel was opened and among the articles which it contained was the manuscript of that lecture, which was given to Dr. S. H. Melvin, one of Mr. Lincoln's intimate and devoted friends. Dr. Melvin was a man of great personal worth and a devout and faithful Christian. He was one of the committee sent to Washington by the people of Springfield to escort the remains of the martyr President to their final resting place in his home city.

Subsequently Dr. Melvin became a resident of Oakland, California, where it was my privilege to be his near neighbor and to have many interesting and helpful interviews with him concerning Mr. Lincoln. Dr. Melvin kept the manuscript copy of the lecture with great care until his death, when it came into the possession of his son, Hon. Henry A. Melvin, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of California, by whose courtesy I have been permitted to give the precious document a prolonged and careful examination and to reproduce in facsimile in this chapter two of its pages.

In that manuscript, Mr. Lincoln mentions Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy "as the Books of Moses" and refers as follows to some of their historical records: "Before the

fall man was put into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

"His (man's) first important discovery was the fact that he was naked, and his first invention was the fig leaf apron.

"At the first interview of the Almighty with Adam and Eve, after the fall, he made coats of skins and clothed them. The Bible makes no allusion to clothing before the fall. Soon after the Deluge, Noah's two sons covered him with a garment, but of what material the garment was made, is not mentioned.

"Tubal Cain was the seventh in descent from Adam and his birth was about one thousand years before the flood."

In speaking of inventions he refers to the Ark "as belonging rather to the miraculous than to human invention." He refers to "the first transgression and the penalty." He also mentions Abraham's act "preparatory to sacrificing Isaac as a burnt offering." "The Red Sea being safely passed, Moses and the Children of Israel sang to the Lord. 'The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the Sea.'

"Abraham mentions 'thread' in such connection as to indicate that spinning and weaving were in use in his day (Genesis xiv, 23), and soon after, reference to the art is frequently made."

"The above mention of thread by Abraham is the oldest recorded allusion to spinning and weaving; and it was made about two thousand years after the creation of man, and now near four thousand years ago. Profane authors think these arts originated in Egypt; and this is not contradicted or made improbable by anything in the Bible; for the allusion of Abraham mentioned was not made until after he had sojourned in Egypt.

"The oldest recorded allusion to the wheel and axle is the mention of a 'chariot' (Genesis xi:43). This was in Egypt, upon the occasion of Joseph being made Governor by Pharaoh. It was about twenty-five hundred years after the creation of Adam.

"Joseph's brethren, on their first visit to Egypt, 'laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.' "

These quotations were all carefully made with full designation of the books, chapters and verses in which they are found in the Bible. They are all in Mr. Lincoln's lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions," from the original manuscript of which, in Mr. Lincoln's own handwriting, I have made these quotations.

It should be remembered that this lecture was prepared by Mr. Lincoln after he had attained nation-wide fame by his debates with Stephen A. Douglas, and it was delivered in Springfield on the 22nd day of February, 1860, only five days before his great speech at Cooper Institute in New York. It was, however, before the new birth of deeper and fuller spiritual realization into which he was ushered by his call to the Presidency and the overwhelming sense of responsibility and of human helplessness which caused him to humble himself before God, and to search the Scriptures with greater diligence and stronger faith than ever before.

And yet at that height of personal vigor, when men are most self-reliant and inclined to skepticism, with his spirit unchastened by sorrow and unsoubered by responsibility, he holds up as authentic and valid, not a Bible composed of selected portions of ancient Scriptures, but the complete volume of revealed Truth, which the Church regards, and which he at that time and ever after regarded as an accurate historical record and an infallible rule of faith and practice. Mr. Lincoln's purpose in making these quotations from the Scripture was to give reliable, historical information concerning the matter under consideration. He quoted from the Bible because he had unquestioning confidence in its historical records. In so doing he declares his belief in the commonly accepted teachings of Scripture respecting the following important matters: Antiquity of Scriptural records; commonly accepted Bible chronology; Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch; account of the Creation of Man; Transgression and

Fall; Penalty for Man's Transgression; Fig-leaf covering; divinely provided garments of animal skins; Deluge; Building of the Ark; Noah's intoxication; Abraham's offering of Isaac; Story of Joseph; Bondage in Egypt; and Crossing the Red Sea.

All who know how scrupulously careful Mr. Lincoln always was never knowingly to make false impressions, will agree in declaring that he would not have made these quotations had he entertained a doubt of their absolute historical accuracy. If he had regarded any of those records as allegorical or in any way less than reliable history he would not have referred to them as he did in this carefully prepared address. The same may be said of other literature in which Mr. Lincoln so mentions the Bible and quotes from its records as to express his belief in the scriptural account of the following: Cain's murder of Abel; the great age of Methuselah; the finding of the infant Moses by Pharaoh's daughter; the Angel of Death in Egypt; the Plagues inflicted upon Egypt; Haman's Gallows and his execution; the Miraculous healing of the Gadarene; the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes; the Saviour's Agony and Prayer in Gethsemane; and the Saviour's Sufferings upon the Cross.

Vibrant with love, the love of a great heart for its most cherished object of affection, are the words which were spoken by President Lincoln when on September 7th, 1864, upon receiving from some colored people of Baltimore a copy of the Holy Scriptures, he said: "In regard to this great Book I have but to say, it is the best gift God has given to man. All the good Saviour gave to the world was communicated through this Book. But for it we could not know right from wrong. All things most desirable for man's welfare, here and hereafter, are to be found portrayed in it." <sup>5</sup>

How like the tribute which an impassioned lover pays to the object of his heart's delight is this expression of President Lincoln's personal regard for "the great Book of God."

<sup>5</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 218.

Those who, having heard him speak, as was my privilege, and noted the irresistible impressiveness with which he always modulated his wonderful voice when he referred to or quoted from the Bible, will in imagination hear the melting melody of which there can be no reproduction, as they read the above sublime utterance from as pure and sincere a heart as ever throbbed with human love and admiration.

A skillful gardener, when asked what he did to his flowers to cause them to be so beautiful, proudly replied, "I love them." No further explanation was necessary; so the mysterious influence of the Bible upon the life and works of Abraham Lincoln is fully explained by his affectionate regard for the sacred Volume. Lincoln loved the Bible. He not only accepted it in its entirety as the revealed Word of God, but he could say as did the Psalmist, "O, how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day."

It was that love which bound him with fetters of enraptured constraint to the diligent study of the sacred Word, a passion of which all his associates were compelled to take note. It was that love that so opened his mind to the declarations he thus studied as to cause them to remain fixed in his recollection, and be transmuted into the exalted character which continues to be the wonder and admiration of the world.

In a letter to Miss Mary Speed, in 1841, when he was thirty-two years old, he wrote: "Tell your mother that I have not got her 'present' (an Oxford Bible) with me, but I intend to read it regularly when I return home. I doubt not that it is really, as she says, the best cure for the blues, could one but take it according to the truth."<sup>6</sup>

How faithfully he kept his promise to read the Bible regularly is shown by the many quotations from the Scriptures which are found in his speeches and writings during succeeding years. His mind seemed stored with Bible truth and he was never at a loss for a passage just suited to his

<sup>6</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. I., p. 180.

needs. In addition to the fact of his familiarity with the Bible are his own declarations, and the statements of others, respecting his diligent Bible study.

Colonel W. H. Crook, who was for years President Lincoln's highly esteemed and trusted bodyguard, says: "The daily life of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln usually commenced at eight o'clock, and immediately upon dressing the President would go into the library, where he would sit in his favorite chair in the middle of the room and read a chapter or two of his Bible. I think I am safe in saying that this was President Lincoln's invariable custom—at least it was such during the time I was on duty with him."<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Alexander Williamson, who was engaged as tutor in the Lincoln family in Washington, said: "Mr. Lincoln very frequently studied the Bible with the aid of Cruden's Concordance, which lay on his table."<sup>8</sup>

It is undoubtedly true that Mr. Lincoln had fixed times for Bible study as here stated by Colonel Crook and Mr. Williamson, and that at such times he put aside every care and thought, and gave whole-hearted and undivided attention to the teachings of God's Word. But in addition to this it was his custom to pick up his Bible as opportunities were presented between public duties and whenever a few minutes could be given to its perusal, and in some secluded nook or at an open window at the evening hour, read and meditate upon its teachings. Some striking instances in which this occurred are here given.

Elizabeth Keckley, thirty years a slave and four years a companion and dressmaker for Mrs. Lincoln, in the White House, says:

"One day Mr. Lincoln came into the room where I was fitting a dress for Mrs. Lincoln. His step was slow and heavy and his face was sad. Like a tired child he threw himself upon a sofa and shaded his eyes with his hands. He was a

<sup>7</sup> Memories of the White House, p. 15.

<sup>8</sup> Lincoln's use of the Bible, p. 8.

complete picture of dejection. Mrs. Lincoln observing his troubled look asked, 'Where have you been, father?'

" 'To the War Department,' was the brief almost sullen answer.

" 'Any news?'

" 'Yes, plenty of news, but no good news. It is dark, dark everywhere.'

"He reached forth one of his long arms and took a small Bible from a stand near the head of the sofa, opened the pages of the Holy Book and soon was absorbed in reading them. A quarter of an hour passed, and on glancing at the sofa the face of the President seemed more cheerful. The dejected look was gone and the countenance was lighted up with new resolution and hope. The change was so marked that I could not but wonder at it, and wonder led to the desire to know what book of the Bible afforded so much comfort to the reader. Making the search for a missing article an excuse, I walked gently around the sofa and looking into the open book I discovered that Mr. Lincoln was reading that Divine Comforter Job. He read with Christian eagerness and the courage and hope that he derived from the inspired pages made him a new man. I almost imagined that I could hear the Lord speaking to him from out the whirlwind battle, 'Gird up thy loins now, like a man; I will demand of thee and declare thou unto me.'"<sup>9</sup>

On May 4th, 1862, Mr. Lincoln, with Secretaries Chase and Stanton, made a trip to Fortress Monroe on an important mission. During their sojourn at that place some very exciting events occurred, including the taking of Norfolk and the consequent destruction by the Confederates of the ironclad *Merrimac*, which had been until the advent of the *Monitor*, such a terror to Government vessels. On their return from that trip, though all were at a high tension, Mr. Lincoln withdrew from the company and when found was, according to the statement of a Mr. Jay, sitting in a secluded corner of the

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth Keckley, *Behind the Scenes*, pp. 118-120.

vessel, absorbed in reading his pocket edition of the New Testament.

In the summer of 1864, Hon. Joshua F. Speed, one of Mr. Lincoln's closest friends, was invited to spend a night with the President and his family at the Soldiers' Home, near the city of Washington. Respecting an incident which occurred during that visit Mr. Speed says:

"As I entered the room, near night, he was sitting near a window intently reading his Bible. Approaching I said, 'I am glad to see you so profitably engaged.'

" 'Yes,' he said, 'I am profitably engaged.'

" 'Well,' said I, 'if you have recovered from your skepticism, I am sorry to say I have not.'

"Looking me earnestly in the face and placing his hand on my shoulder, he said: 'You are wrong, Speed. Take all of this book upon reason that you can and the balance on faith and you will live and die a happier and better man.'"<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Robert Browne, to whom reference already has been made, says:

"Mr. Lincoln read his Bible every day. He held it to be his treasure and indisputable authority. In its texts and principles he founded the basis of every argument or declaration he ever used against slavery. He did this, too, in his remarkable progress and high distinction as a lawyer. In the same way he grounded his belief and framed his reasoning on his land and debt reforms in profound respect and obedience to divine authority. He referred often to Matt. 7:12. 'Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.'"<sup>11</sup>

This habitual Bible study caused Mr. Lincoln to become so familiar with the Bible that he could often use passages and incidents to great advantage in conversation with those who called upon him at the White House. An exceedingly

<sup>10</sup> Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln, p. 32.

<sup>11</sup> Abraham Lincoln and the Men of his Time, Vol. II., p. 633. .

interesting instance of this is given by Thomas F. Pendleton, who was for many years doorkeeper at the White House:

"One day a man with a very swarthy complexion came in, wearing a silk hat and a Prince Albert coat. You would have taken him at first glance for a minister of the gospel. He commenced finding fault with Mr. Stanton, accusing him of not carrying out the order that President Lincoln had given two weeks before to have a certain man liberated from prison who had been sentenced to death but was pardoned.

"Mr. Lincoln listened patiently to his complaint and then said emphatically: 'If it had not been for me that man would now be in his grave. Now, sir, you claim to be a philanthropist. If you will get your Bible and turn to the 30th chapter of Proverbs, the tenth verse, you will read these words: 'Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee and thou be found guilty.' Whereupon the man got huffy and went away. But as he went out he said angrily, 'There is no such passage in the Bible.' 'Oh, yes,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'I think you will find it in the 30th chapter of Proverbs and at the tenth verse.'

"This was late in the afternoon and I thought no more of the occurrence. Next morning I was at Mr. Lincoln's office door as usual at eight o'clock and heard some one calling out, 'Oh, Pendleton, I say Pendleton, come in here.' When I went inside Mr. Lincoln said to me: 'Wait a minute.' He stepped quickly into the private part of the house and soon reappeared with his Bible in his hand. He then sat down and read to me that identical passage he had quoted to the philanthropist, and sure enough it was found to be in the 30th chapter of Proverbs, and at the tenth verse.

"In those days I was not much of a Bible reader, but in 1865 I decided that all-important question whether or not I should not be a follower of the Lord Jesus. I commenced reading a little old Bible that I had bought at the second-hand store. . . . One day I came across that same passage which Mr. Lincoln had quoted to the angry philanthropist.

The whole occurrence came back to me and I thought what a just man was the President. He was not even willing for me to be in doubt as to his correct quotation of a Bible passage but must needs take his precious time to prove himself right in my eyes."<sup>12</sup>

During his service in Congress, on May 21st, 1848, in a somewhat infelicitous correspondence with Rev. J. M. Peck, with reference to some acts under consideration, Mr. Lincoln said: "Possibly you consider those acts too small for notice. Would you venture to so consider them had they been committed by any nation on earth against the humblest of our people? I know you would not. Then I ask, is the precept, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,' obsolete? of no force? of no application?"<sup>13</sup>

During the preceding year, in a speech in Congress on the tariff, December 1st, 1847, Mr. Lincoln said: "In the early days of our race the Almighty said to the first of our race, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread'; and since then, if we except the light and air of heaven, no good thing has been or can be enjoyed by us without having first cost labor."<sup>14</sup>

In his eulogy on Henry Clay, Mr. Lincoln said: "Pharaoh's country was cursed with plagues and his hosts were lost in the Red Sea for striving to retain a captive people who had already served them for more than four hundred years. May this disaster never befall us!"<sup>15</sup>

In his speech at Peoria, Illinois, October 16th, 1854, he said: "God did not place good and evil before man, telling him to make his choice. On the contrary, He did tell him there was one tree of the fruit of which he should not eat, upon pain of certain death."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Thirty-six Years in the White House, pp. 25-26.

<sup>13</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., p. 26.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., Vol. I., p. 306.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Vol. II., p. 177.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

At Alton, Illinois, October 15th, 1858, in his closing speech of the great debate with Douglas, Mr. Lincoln said: "He (Douglas) has warred upon them (Lincoln's sentiments) as Satan wars upon the Bible."<sup>17</sup>

Even in foreign lands, Mr. Lincoln was known as a devout Bible student, as indicated by the following from Richard Lovell, A.M., London: "Lincoln's nature was deeply religious. From boyhood he had been familiar with the Bible and as the years passed his belief and trust in God's overruling and active providence in the affairs of men and nations ever deepened."<sup>18</sup>

As Trevena Jackson says: "The spirit of the Bible was built into Lincoln's boyhood, expanded in his young manhood, ripened in his middle age, sustained him when sorrows seared his soul, and gave to him a grip upon God, man, freedom, and immortality. The influence of the Bible upon him gave him reverence for God and His will; for Christianity and its Christ; for the Holy Spirit and its help; for prayer and its power; for praise and its purpose; for the immortal impulse and its inspiration."<sup>19</sup>

In 1901, in an address before the American Bible Society on "Reading the Bible," former President Roosevelt made the following tender statements respecting Lincoln's familiarity with the Bible: "Lincoln, sad, patient, kindly Lincoln, who, after bearing upon his shoulders for four years a greater burden than that borne by any other man of the Nineteenth century, laid down his life for the people whom, living, he had served so well, built up his entire reading upon his study of the Bible. He had mastered it absolutely, mastered it as later he mastered only one or two other books, notably Shakespeare, mastered it so that he became almost a man of one book who knew that book, and who instinctively put into practice what he had been taught therein; and he

<sup>17</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. V., p. 45.

<sup>18</sup> Abraham Lincoln, p. 16.

<sup>19</sup> Lincoln's use of the Bible, p. 35.

left his life as part of the crowning work of the century just closed."<sup>20</sup>

Investigating the religious faith of Abraham Lincoln is like working a vein of high-grade ore, which increases in width and in richness as the work of mining progresses. It is more than five decades since I first began to prosecute my researches on this subject. These researches began during the year 1860, after Mr. Lincoln had become the republican candidate for President of the United States, being suggested by the volume published that year as a campaign document which contained not only the speeches by Lincoln and Douglas, but also some of Mr. Lincoln's most notable speeches prior and subsequent to those famous debates. In addition to his own declarations concerning religious matters I have sought, with great care, to collate information respecting his faith from the testimonies of those with whom he was most intimately associated. As this investigation has proceeded I have found the subject becoming increasingly fascinating and instructive; and with the product of my prolonged researches before me I am profoundly impressed by the clear and unequivocal evidence furnished of Mr. Lincoln's firm belief in the most vital features of Christian truth.

The first scriptural truth learned by Abraham Lincoln was doubtless that stated in the first four words of the Bible: "In the beginning God." That truth which, as a mere child he was taught by his godly mother, became and continued to be the foundation upon which was erected his entire system of religious faith. His belief in a Supreme Being was at once fundamental and all-dominant in his faith and life.

It may be only a mere fancy, but it is exceedingly interesting and suggestive, that the earliest fragment of his autograph now known to be in existence is the following rhyme written in his copy book when he was only fourteen years old:

<sup>20</sup> Lincoln's use of the Bible, p. 10.

“Abraham Lincoln  
his hand and pen.  
he will be good but  
god knows When.”

It is profoundly significant that this child of destiny, at his life's early morning, in clumsy but impressive verse thus reverently coupled his own name with that of his Creator, and that the hand which afterwards wrote the Emancipation Proclamation first learned to use a pen by laboriously writing a declaration of belief in a Supreme Being.

The significance of this youthful testimony to the existence and omniscience of God is not in the least degree dependent upon his comprehension of the full meaning of what he wrote. If it be claimed that his words have a meaning beyond his own understanding it will serve only to remind us that the same has often been true of literary productions. If he employed hackneyed terms or transcribed what others before had written he was as I believe in so doing unconsciously following a deeper impulse of the heart.

He used the name of God in the most natural and un-studied manner because his belief in God pervaded his being, and he referred to the Divine omniscience as the spontaneous expression of the faith which he received from his mother's instruction.

I am not claiming for this fragment of a Lincoln manuscript any direct divine inspiration. But I cannot regard and treat it as belonging to a class with those manuscripts which simply tell of Mr. Lincoln's early educational pursuits. It is certainly more significant than are they in that it bears witness to his early matter of fact trend of thought which moved steadily in the direction of an ever-increasing comprehension of God.

That trend of thought was with him like an undeviating and unhindered approach from dawn to daylight, and resulted in an expansion of soul, enlargement of spiritual vision and

deepened religious experience, until he seems to have found and rested upon a satisfying and sustaining faith.

The Scripture admonition, "Acquaint now thyself with him and be at peace" (Job 22:21), was one to which he gave constant heed. He sought to know God; to know Him as revealed "in the heavens above and in the earth beneath;" to know Him as revealed in His holy Word; to know Him as revealed in Jesus Christ, and to know Him as revealed in personal religious experience. This continued until Lincoln realized in his own being the fulfillment of the promise, "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee." (Isa. 26:3.) This could not be otherwise since with all his heart and soul he believed in

#### DIVINE OMNIPOTENCE

In his first inaugural address delivered March 4th, 1861, Mr. Lincoln said: "If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with His eternal truth and justice, be on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people."<sup>21</sup>

In reply to a letter from Mrs. Horace Mann, on behalf of a class of children in whom she was interested, President Lincoln on April 5th, 1864, sent the following beautiful message: "Please tell these little people that I am very glad their young hearts are so full of just and generous sympathy, and that, while I have not the power to grant all they ask, I trust they will remember that God has, and that, as it seems, He wills to do it."<sup>22</sup>

In his "Meditation on Divine Will," which is supposed to have been written September 30th, 1862, he says: "By His (that is God's) mere great power on the minds of the now contestants, He could have either saved or destroyed the

<sup>21</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., p. 183.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., Vol. X., pp. 68-69.

Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And, having begun, He could give the final victory to either side any day."<sup>23</sup>

These declarations of Mr. Lincoln abundantly justify the following comprehensive and significant testimony of Hon. H. C. Whitney, who knew him intimately for many years: "Logically and inevitably, therefore, he believed in God; in His superintending providence; in His intervention in mundane affairs for the weal of the race. To Him he made report; from Him he took counsel; at His hands he implored current aid; he ascribed glory and thanks to Him; he recognized Him as the Supreme Good. God came to him monitorially; with succor; with good cheer; with victory. He confounded the counsels of his accusers; He made the wrath of his enemies to minister to his good; His direct intervention the President experienced in many ways. Lincoln acknowledged all with a grateful heart; he ordered national thanksgivings and praises on every suitable occasion. Therefore, he had more proofs to warrant his belief, and believed more implicitly in God, and approached nearer to Him than any man of the race since Moses, the lawgiver."<sup>24</sup>

These statements of Mr. Lincoln's belief in the omnipotence of God are not more clear or emphatic than are those concerning

#### DIVINE OMNISCIENCE

"The all-wise Creator," "An all-wise Providence," and similar statements appear many times in Mr. Lincoln's writings, and bear witness to his unquestioning confidence in the infinite knowledge and wisdom of God.

On September 4th, 1864, at a time when according to his own deliberate statements he was in doubt relative to his re-election, in a letter to Mrs. Eliza P. Gurney, a devout Christian woman of the Society of Friends, he said: "The

<sup>23</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 52.

<sup>24</sup> Lincoln, the Citizen, pp. 203-204.

purposes of the Almighty are perfect, and must prevail, though we erring mortals may fail to accurately perceive them in advance. We hoped for a happy termination of this terrible war long before this; but God knows best, and has ruled otherwise. We shall yet acknowledge His wisdom and our own error therein. Meanwhile we must work earnestly in the best light He gives us, trusting that so working still conduces to the great ends He ordains. Surely He intends some great good to follow this mighty convulsion, which no mortal could make, and no mortal could stay."<sup>25</sup>

#### DIVINE OMNIPRESENCE

The most famous Hebrew poetry never rose to a higher level of grandeur, nor did it ever express more comfortingly the thought of God's environing presence, than did the sublimely simple words of Abraham Lincoln spoken on the 11th of February, 1861, when taking leave of his friends and neighbors: "Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well."<sup>26</sup>

These words, in my judgment, are worthy of being put alongside the sublime utterances on divine omnipresence found in the 139th Psalm, or in the climax of Paul's masterly oration delivered to the Athenians on Mars Hill.

<sup>25</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., pp. 215-216.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., Vol. VI., p. 110.

### III

#### LINCOLN'S RELIGIOUS FAITH—CONTINUED

**I**N the forefront of Mr. Lincoln's religious thinking was his belief in

#### THE SAVIOUR'S DEITY

That belief was expressed by him in clear and unequivocal language. The teachings of Scripture relative to this doctrine are not more lucid than was the declaration of Mr. Lincoln when, in that wonderful unbosoming of himself to Dr. Newton Bateman a few weeks before his first election as President, as Dr. Holland tells us, he said: "I know I am right, for Christ says so, and Christ is God."<sup>1</sup>

A few weeks later, after his election as President and before his inauguration, he said to his lifelong friend, Judge Joseph Gillispie: "I have read on my knees the story of Gethsemane, where the Son of God prayed in vain that the cup of bitterness might pass from Him."<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps quite as significant as any specific statement of Mr. Lincoln respecting the Saviour's deity was his oft-repeated mention of Him as "our Lord." Again and again, in speeches, in conversation and in his correspondence does Mr. Lincoln thus speak of the Saviour; and there was always a peculiar manifestation of solemnity and reverence when those words fell from his lips. Those of us who were privileged to hear him utter those words will never doubt his belief that Jesus Christ had to him "all the religious value of God," as a modern school of religious thought has phrased

<sup>1</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> H. C. Whitney, Lincoln the Citizen, p. 201.

it. There is heart-melting pathos in the little story so beautifully told by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Emerson, two Christian people of Rockford, Illinois, who stood perhaps as close to Mr. Lincoln as did any human beings outside of his own family. In reporting a time of special communing they say: "During that trip we walked down on the river, and the conversation turned on a trip to Palestine and Jerusalem. Lincoln's countenance seemed at once to light up and he exclaimed, 'Yes, to tread the ground the Saviour trod!' Never from other human lips have I heard the word 'Saviour' pronounced with such deep earnestness. Apparently absorbed with the two thoughts of the evils of slavery and of the Saviour, we wandered on in silence and so parted."<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Lincoln also believed in

#### THE SAVIOUR'S TEMPTATION

The story of that mysterious experience of the Saviour which is a part of the New Testament record would naturally appeal to one so greatly tried as was Mr. Lincoln, and it may be reasonably claimed that had he made no reference to the matter himself, he could properly be regarded as believing in that story. But Mr. Lincoln has made such inference unnecessary by his own declarations relative to the matter.

In his letter to Dr. Ide and Senator Doolittle, dated May 30th, 1864, he declared that the conduct of some Southern leaders "contemned and insulted God and His Church far more than did Satan when he tempted the Saviour with the kingdoms of earth. The devil's attempt was no more false, and far less hypocritical."<sup>4</sup>

Hard to understand as is the above mentioned event in the life of the Saviour it is certain that Mr. Lincoln accepted it as not only authentic and true but as full of significance and meaning. With all his heart and soul, as indicated by his oft-

<sup>3</sup> Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Emerson, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 10-12.

<sup>4</sup> *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. X., p. 109.

repeated declarations, Mr. Lincoln believed in the supreme authority of

### THE SAVIOUR'S TEACHINGS

If from all that Mr. Lincoln has written and said there could be taken that which he quotes from the teachings of Christ, and his own interpretation and application of those teachings, but little of value would be left. Prominent among his many quotations from the words of Jesus are the following:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."

This quotation was made not only the keynote of that great speech at Springfield by which Mr. Lincoln first attracted the attention of the nation, but also expressed the dominant thought in his subsequent political program.

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

These words of the Saviour were by Mr. Lincoln accepted as the "Golden Rule" which makes the golden life; and were by him adopted as a full and satisfactory statement of the portion of his religious creed pertaining to human conduct.

"Woe unto the world because of offenses."

This declaration of Jesus stands out in the second inaugural address as the marvelously fitting statement of Mr. Lincoln's distinguishing belief in the great doctrine of divine retribution.

"Let us judge not that we be not judged."

By these words, Mr. Lincoln in that inaugural calls for the exercise of self-restraint. After referring to the surprise which might be felt in view of the prayers of professed Christians for divine aid in their efforts to maintain slavery, he virtually admonished himself and others to refrain from hasty and uncharitable judgment. This seems the more significant when it is remembered that several months previous to this occasion, when Mr. Lincoln was moved to express with severity his opinion of the conduct of professed followers of Christ,

who not only sought to enslave their fellows but had gone to war against their government in order that they might protect and promote slavery, he said: "But I must forbear, remembering that it is also said: 'Judge not that ye be not judged.'"

Very beautiful and instructive is Mr. Lincoln's reference to

"The lost sheep."

The significance of Mr. Lincoln's reference to this parable of the Saviour, and his designating of Judge Douglas as fittingly represented by the lost and endangered sheep, should be considered in connection with the Saviour's own interpretation of this parable when he said: "Even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine righteous persons which need no repentance."<sup>5</sup>

Among the numberless citations that might be given are the following:

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

"He notes the falling sparrow."

"The hairs of your head are numbered."

As early as 1850, in a tender letter to his stepbrother, written to be read to his own dying father, Mr. Lincoln quoted the last two of these sayings of Jesus in proof of the Heavenly Father's tenderness and minute, supervising care.

Still earlier, namely, in 1842, in his famous temperance speech Mr. Lincoln refers to the "unpardonable sin," for the purpose of expressing the conviction that such was not chargeable to the drunkard; but that he was an object of divine compassion and of tender mercy. The text

"Be ye perfect even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect,"

was quoted by Mr. Lincoln as a statement of the exalted aims which should characterize every Christian.

During the period between his first election and his inauguration as President, Mr. Lincoln was urged by some

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 15: 7.

anxious friends throughout the nation to make a public manifesto of his principles and purposes that would quiet the apprehensions of the Southern people. To this he replied by calling attention to the many statements he already had made, and, having driven home the nail he clinched it by saying:

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."<sup>6</sup>

Immensely significant is this quotation from that dramatic and searching illustration employed by the Saviour to represent the sin and the danger of human incorrigibility. The Saviour's reference to

"The blood of righteous Abel," and His declaration that

"He that is not with me is against me,"

were most appropriately quoted by Mr. Lincoln not only to express his belief in the Saviour's teachings but also to make effective the instruction he was seeking to impart.

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

It is worthy of note that by these words Mr. Lincoln rebuked some thoughtless boys for their unkindness to one of their number. But why multiply examples? The speeches, letters and recorded conversations of Lincoln teem with allusions to the Saviour's teachings, and the use made of them affords indubitable evidence that he accepted them as divinely inspired. Mr. Lincoln believed also in

#### THE SAVIOUR'S MIRACLES

His reference to the miracle of the loaves and fishes, and to the case of the Gadarene swineherd who was cured, clothed and brought into his right mind, very clearly indicate his belief in the miracle-working power of Christ; and doubtless he regarded with unquestioning acceptance all the other miracles of the New Testament.

He also believed in

<sup>6</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., p. 64.

## THE SAVIOUR'S SUFFERING AND DEATH

There was probably no time in all his sad, weary life when his sufferings were so exquisite and so devoid of all alleviation as during that period to which reference already has been made, between his first election as President and his inauguration. Utterly unable to lift a hand to avert or delay the calamity he saw sweeping down upon the nation he could but suffer in silence looking on from the distance, while the fires were rapidly kindling to consume the nation. And to his mind it was not unfitting that he should refer, as he did in conversation with Judge Gillispie, to the Saviour's sufferings in Gethsemane, as illustrative of his own inability to find relief from the agony through which he was passing.

In his notes prepared in 1850 for a lecture on Niagara Falls he refers to the fact that the wonderful cataract was in activity "when Christ suffered on the cross." Concerning the fundamental truth of Christ's atoning sacrifice Abraham Lincoln never faltered. It sometimes may have seemed to him an unfathomable mystery as it does to all; but his cast of mind and the methods by which he gained his wonderful knowledge of law, enabled him to understand in some measure the philosophy of the divine plan for human salvation, and to give atonement for sin its necessary and proper place. If he did not frequently refer to this doctrine, that may merely indicate how inseparable from the Christian system he regarded it. Believing in the gospel story of the life, death and resurrection of Christ, and speaking of Him with the greatest tenderness "as the good Saviour" he could no more doubt the doctrine of atonement than he could disbelieve in his own existence. And fully characteristic of his habits and style, was the course he pursued in treating his belief in the atonement as a matter of course, and in referring to it only as occasions made it necessary.

But there were occasions on which Mr. Lincoln's declarations concerning this matter were clear and comprehensive.

Those who would fain make him out an unbeliever, have repeated with tireless industry the falsehood respecting his having, in early life, written a manuscript against Christianity which a friend snatched from his hands and cast into the fire. This story, which could have originated only in malice and concealed revenge, has been shown to have no other foundation than the burning of a letter which referred to matters of rivalry in love. And instead of having written an attack upon Christianity, it has been proven beyond question, that in 1833, the time referred to, Mr. Lincoln while investigating religious matters prepared with great care an article on the compassion and mercy of God, in which he claimed that all the evil consequences of Adam's transgression found a full and sufficient remedy in the sufferings and death of Christ. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive," was the passage of Scripture by which the young lawyer sought to prove the perfect efficacy of the work of atonement. That passage of Scripture was commonly quoted in those days, and by many teachers at a later period, as defining the extent of the work of atonement; and it was undoubtedly quoted by Mr. Lincoln with that understanding.

I am not seeking, however, to state definitely the extent to which Mr. Lincoln believed the work of atonement; it is sufficient to know that with all his heart and soul he believed that Christ "tasted death for every man."

The foregoing statement relating to Lincoln's manuscript on Christianity is borne out by a letter of Mr. Menter Graham, who was upon the most intimate terms with Mr. Lincoln from the time of his coming to Illinois until his departure to Washington, as President, in which he thus testifies: "Abraham Lincoln was living at my house at New Salem going to school, studying English Grammar and surveying in the year 1833. One morning he said to me, 'Graham, what do you think about the anger of the Lord?' I replied, 'I believe the Lord was never angry or mad and never would be; that His loving kindness endureth forever.' Said Lincoln, 'I have a little

manuscript written which I will show you,' and stated that he thought of having it published. Offering it to me he said he had never shown it to any one and still thought of having it published. The size of the manuscript was about a half a quire of foolscap paper, written in a very plain hand on the subject of Christianity. The commencement of it was something respecting the God of the Universe never being excited, mad or angry. I had the manuscript in my possession some week or ten days. I have read many books on the subject of theology and I do not think in point of perspicuity and plainness of reasoning I ever read one to surpass it. I remember well his argument. He took the passage, 'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive,' and followed up with the proposition that whatever the breach or injury of Adam's transgression to the human race was, which no doubt was very great, was made just and right by the atonement of Christ."<sup>7</sup>

In 1859, twenty-six years after the writing of that remarkable production, being the year following the great Lincoln-Douglas debates, and the year preceding Mr. Lincoln's election as President, Mr. Isaac Cogsdale, of Illinois, called upon Mr. Lincoln, at his office in Springfield, and frankly made inquiry concerning his religious belief. Mr. Lincoln's reply was based, as he said at the time, upon his understanding of the teachings of the Bible, and among other things, according to Mr. Cogsdale, he said: "All that was lost by the transgression of Adam was made good by Atonement. All that was lost by the Fall was made good by the Sacrifice; and he added this remark, that punishment being a provision of the gospel system he was not sure but the world would be better if a little more punishment was preached by our ministers and not so much pardon for sin. Lincoln told me he never took part in the argument or discussion of theological questions."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, p. 64.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

The following story related by Mr. F. B. Carpenter, the artist who painted the picture of President Lincoln and his Cabinet, considering the Emancipation Proclamation, illustrates the readiness with which Mr. Lincoln summoned Bible doctrines to aid him in the performance of official duty, according to the promptings of his loving heart. Mr. Carpenter says:

My friend, the Hon. Mr. Kellogg of New York, was sitting in his room at his boarding house one evening, when one of his constituents appeared—a white-headed old man—who had come to Washington in great trouble, to seek the aid of his representative in behalf of his son. His story was this: "The young man had formerly been very dissipated. During an absence from home a year or two previous to the war, he enlisted in the regular army, and after serving six months, deserted. Returning to his father, who knew nothing of this, he reformed his habits, and when the war broke out, entered heart and soul into the object of raising a regiment in his native county, and was subsequently elected one of its officers. He had proved an efficient officer, distinguishing himself particularly on one occasion, in a charge across a bridge, when he was severely wounded,—his colonel being killed by his side. Shortly after this, he came in contact with one of his old companions in the 'regular' service, who recognized him, and declared his purpose of informing against him.

"Overwhelmed with mortification, the young man procured a furlough and returned home, revealing the matter to his father, and declaring his purpose never to submit to an arrest,—'he would die first.'"

"In broken tones the old man finished his statement, saying: 'Can you do anything for us, Judge?—it is a hard, hard case!' 'I will see about that,' replied the representative, putting on his hat; 'wait here until I return.' He went immediately to the White House, and fortunately finding Mr. Lincoln alone, they sat down together, and he repeated the old man's story. The President made no demonstration of

particular interest until the Judge reached the description of the charge across the bridge and the wound received. 'Do you say,' he interrupted, 'that the young man was wounded?' 'Yes,' replied the Congressman, 'badly.' 'Then he had shed his blood for his country,' responded Mr. Lincoln, musingly. 'Kellogg,' he continued, brightening up, 'isn't there something in the Scripture about the shedding of blood being the remission of sins?' 'Guess you are about right there,' replied the Judge. 'It is a good point, and there is no going behind it,' rejoined the President; and taking up his pen, another 'pardon'—this time without 'oath,' condition, or reserve—was added to the records of the War Office."<sup>9</sup>

Somehow there was a close bond of fellowship between Mr. Lincoln and Father Chiniquy, and in a prolonged interview with that devoted friend, Mr. Lincoln is reported to have given utterance to the following sentiments: "Why did God Almighty refuse to Moses the favor of crossing the Jordan, and entering the Promised Land? It was on account of the nation's sins! That law of divine retribution and justice, by which one must suffer for another, is surely a terrible mystery. But it is a fact which no man who has any intelligence and knowledge can deny. Moses, who knew that law, though he probably did not understand it better than we do, calmly says to his people, 'God was wroth with me for your sakes.'

"But though we do not understand that mysterious and terrible law, we find it written in letters of tears and blood wherever we go. We do not read a single page of history without finding undeniable traces of its existence.

"Where is the mother who has not shed real tears and suffered real tortures, for her children's sake?

"Who is the good king, the worthy emperor, the gifted chieftain, who has not suffered unspeakable mental agonies, or even death, for his people's sake?

"Is not our Christian religion the highest expression of

<sup>9</sup> Six Months in the White House, pp. 318-319.



FATHER CHARLES CHINIQUY

Greatly beloved by Abraham Lincoln.



the wisdom, mercy and love of God? But what is Christianity if not the very incarnation of that eternal law of divine justice in our humanity?

"When I look on Moses, alone silently dying on the Mount of Pisgah, I see that law in one of its most sublime human manifestations, and I am filled with admiration and awe.

"But when I consider that law of justice, and expiation in the death of the Just, the divine Son of Mary, on the Mount of Calvary, I remain mute in my adoration. The spectacle of the Crucified One which is before my eyes is more than sublime, it is divine! Moses died for his people's sake, but Christ died for the whole world's sake! Both died to fulfill the same eternal law of the divine justice, though in a different measure."<sup>10</sup>

Lincoln believed in the doctrine of

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

The most remarkable feature of Mr. Lincoln's religious life was his faith in, and constant reliance upon, the Holy Spirit. The third person of the Holy Trinity he always and properly regarded as the executive of the Godhead. He seems to have kept constantly in mind the truth so clearly taught by the Scriptures and by the symbols of the Church that "whatever God does He does by the Spirit." All his literary works, whether carefully or hurriedly written, as well as his spoken words, abound in direct or indirect references to the Holy Spirit. They are also dominated by a sense of the Spirit's presence and leading. Nothing of value concerning religious matters would be left in his literary productions if those portions relating to the Holy Spirit were removed. His references to God, the Father Almighty, and to Jesus Christ, would be utterly without significance apart from his declared or understood faith in the Holy Spirit. It is so certain as to be universally admitted, that Abraham Lincoln lived and wrought

<sup>10</sup> Fifty Years in the Church of Rome, pp. 706-711.

in constant dependence upon God. And equally certain is it that all that he hoped to realize from the favor of God, whether in the gift of needed wisdom or guidance for which he prayed so devoutly, in strength and ability to bear his burdens and perform his tasks, or in divine guidance in counsel and judgment, help in battle upon sea and land, and in all upon which he asked or desired the favor of God, his expectation was in all cases that the desired favors if granted would be ministered by the Holy Spirit.

Mr. Lincoln's expectations of divine help, through the Holy Spirit, were thoroughly scriptural and were sustained by his familiarity with the declarations of the Bible. He always sustained a scriptural attitude when seeking the aid from heaven, making his appeal for divine help in a spirit of humility and with a sense of utter helplessness.

The spirit which was dominant in all his life found striking expression when, as he left his home city for his great and final work he expressed his sense of utter helplessness without divine aid. He had a most exalted opinion of the American people. He believed in their patriotism, their loyalty to the government, their wisdom and their unsurpassed courage; and while proposing to make the most of their strength and help, his hope of success rested wholly in the favor of God; and that divine favor he expected to receive through such ministrations of the Holy Spirit as the exigencies of his life made necessary.

"The stars in their courses fought against Sisera" (Judges 5:20), and Abraham Lincoln who was familiar with this declaration of Scripture knew that the Almighty was able to marshal the forces of the celestial world to aid His own people. "And the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines and discomfited them" (I Sam. 7:10), and Abraham Lincoln accepted this as a declaration of God's purpose to call into activity the elements of nature for the accomplishment of His high purposes. He believed in the power and purpose of God, by His Holy Spirit,

to marshal the animate hosts of the heavens, and the inanimate forces of nature as He did in ancient times for the defeat of those who wickedly fought against His cause and His people. He believed that like power would be brought into activity, if necessary, to save the nation from destruction. But his chief reliance was upon the helpful influences of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts and minds of the children of men. He did not expect any interference with the power to originate the activities of the human mind, nor with the freedom of choice which is a matter of individual consciousness, and which also is the ground for personal responsibility. But he knew that in the exercise of freedom of thought and of choice we are subject to the influences of the Divine Spirit and are upheld and sustained by divine power. With unquestioning confidence he believed that God's Spirit illuminates the human mind and influences for good those who yield to divine leadership.

Mr. Lincoln did not look for any miraculous revelation of the Divine Will but he did confidently expect that the Holy Spirit would help him to perform his allotted task clearly interpreting the mind of God. Hence, he studied God's Word with diligence and listened with constant attention to the voice of the Spirit within his heart, that he might be divinely led. He believed that wisdom needed for the performance of every duty would be administered to him by the direct influences of the Holy Spirit; and so fully were his expectations in this regard realized that many of his official acts which were ascribed to his superb genius were by him declared to be suggested by the Divine Spirit in answer to prayer.

In a conversation with Dr. Robert Browne, Mr. Lincoln made the following extended statements respecting his own experiences of the leadings of the Holy Spirit:

"When I set my mind at work to find some way of evading or declining a journey, a speech or service, instead of my own spirit a something stronger says, 'You must go. You must not

disappoint these people, who have given you their confidence as they have no other man.'

"I am a full believer that God knows what He wants a man to do, that which pleases Him. It is never well with the man who heeds it not. I talk to God. My mind seems relieved when I do, and a way is suggested, that if it is not a supernatural one, it is always one that comes at the time, and accords with a common-sense view of the work. I take up the common one of making a speech somewhere or other. These come almost every day. I get ready for them as occasion seems to require. I arrange the facts, make a few notes, some little memorandums like those you have seen so often and are so familiar with. I take them, and as far as facts are concerned confine myself to them, and rarely make any particular preparation for feeling, sympathy or purely sentimental thoughts.

"When my plans for the discussion are made, and the foundations are laid, I find that I am done and all at sea unless I arouse myself to the spirit and merits of my cause. With my mind directed to the necessity, I catch the fire of it, the spirit, or the inspiration. I see it reflected in the open faces and throbbing hearts before me. This impulse comes and goes, and again returns and seems to take possession of me. The influence, whatever it is, has taken effect. It is contagious; the people fall into the stream and follow me in the inspiration, or what is beyond my understanding. This seems evidence to me, a weak man, that God himself is leading my way."<sup>11</sup>

The following from Judge Whitney is striking and instructive:

"It is due to myself to state that I have not been betrayed into a vain laudatory of my subject, because the general consensus of the world's opinion so directs; but that, independent of all contemporary opinion, as early as 1856, I conceived, and did not hesitate to express, the opinion, that Mr. Lincoln was a paragon, and prodigy of intellectual and moral force. Others, associated with us, deemed him superlatively great, but still

<sup>11</sup> Abraham Lincoln and Men of War Times, Vol. II., pp. 194-195.

merely human. I went further; my view was definite and pronounced, that Lincoln was inspired of God: that he was ordained for a greater than merely human mission; and I used to avow this belief as early as that time.

"Swett said to me at Danville one evening, despairingly after Lincoln had made a political speech: 'Of what use is it for fellows like Vorhees and me to try to make speeches? Whenever I hear Lincoln, I feel as if I never should try to make a political speech again.'

"I tried to comfort him by the reflection that 'the Deity inspired Lincoln, and, of course, he could not hope to match the Divine.'

"I had no idea of Mr. Lincoln's mission; I then thought he was the greatest man I ever saw; I now know that God worked in him to will and to do, of His own good pleasure."<sup>12</sup>

The disclosure by Mr. Lincoln of his dependence upon spiritual guidance and inspiration in his preparation and delivery of public speeches, as stated by him in his interview with Dr. Robert Browne, explains in part what is spoken of as a "miracle" in the following by Bishop McDowell, one of the most gifted and eloquent of modern pulpit orators:

"At Gettysburg, Edward Everett spoke magnificently through many thousand noble words—a masterly oration. Lincoln spoke three minutes, two hundred and fifty words, and this is the principal address of that day or many days. The second inaugural is only seven hundred and fifty words in length, but while liberty lasts, while charity survives among men, while patriotism lives under any flag, these few words will be on men's lips like prophecy, psalm or gospel. How did this man, born in poverty, reared in poverty, untrained in any schools, come to do this miracle? It is not a trick of expression, it is the miracle of supreme truth, supremely stated."<sup>13</sup>

Mr. Lincoln believed in the Holy Spirit as the One who ministers divine aid to individual human beings, and the reali-

<sup>12</sup> *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*, p. 591.

<sup>13</sup> *The Tributes of a Century*, p. 369.

zation of his need of such ministration caused him to make almost countless requests for the prayers of Christian people for himself. These requests came welling up from his overburdened heart, and showed that he was reaching out for that aid of the Spirit of wisdom and of power which he felt and declared was indispensable to the successful accomplishment of his divinely appointed work. And when he asked ministers of the gospel and other church people to kneel with him in prayer, as he often did in the White House, it was a confession of his faith in the Holy Spirit as the One by whom all needed divine grace is ministered. Such requests for prayer are significant only when they are known to include such an explicit or implicit faith.

To L. E. Chittenden, Register of the Treasury, Mr. Lincoln said: "It makes me stronger and more confident to know that all Christians are praying for our success."<sup>14</sup>

Mr. Lincoln not only thus freely confessed his realization of utter and constant dependence upon God, but he freely believed and freely confessed that he was divinely guided and aided in his choice of others to the work. His unyielding demand that Mr. Fessenden should accept the position of Secretary of the Treasury, at a financial crisis in the nation's history, was based upon his claim that he was divinely guided in making that appointment. When the distinguished senator from Maine emphatically and almost indignantly declared to Mr. Lincoln that he could not and would not accept the position, Mr. Lincoln calmly replied: "Last night I saw my way clear to appoint you Secretary of the Treasury. I do not think you have any right to tell me you will not accept the place. I believe that the suppression of the Rebellion has been decreed by a Higher Power than any represented by us, and that the Almighty is using His means to that end. You are one of them. It is as much your duty to accept as it is mine to appoint."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Recollections of President Lincoln and his Administration, p. 450.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 382.

So confident was Mr. Lincoln that he had been divinely guided in this matter, that he said to Mr. Fessenden: "Your nomination is now on the way from the State Department, and in a few minutes it will be here. It will be in the Senate at noon, you will be immediately and unanimously confirmed, and by one o'clock today you must be signing warrants in the treasury."<sup>16</sup>

This entire program which Mr. Lincoln confidently claimed was divinely prepared and announced to him was carried out, and Mr. Fessenden at once entered upon his service as Secretary of the Treasury, in which his achievements fully justified Mr. Lincoln's claim that the statesman from Maine was God's choice for that position.

To Mr. Chittenden President Lincoln afterwards said: "I am satisfied that when the Almighty wants me to do or not to do a particular thing, He finds a way of letting me know it. I am confident that it is His design to restore the nation. He will do it in His own good time. We should obey and not oppose His way. . . . All we have to do is to trust the Almighty and keep right on obeying His orders and executing His will."<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Lincoln believed that his duty might be made known to him through the revelations of the Holy Spirit given to others. He was familiar with the Scripture records of many such disclosures of the divine will, and therefore he was ever alert for some message which might be brought to him from some faithful servant of the Most High. He often sought counsel of his pastor, Rev. Dr. Gurley, and of other ministers in whom he had special confidence. Dr. Gurley was the first person whom he consulted respecting the Emancipation Proclamation, and that famous measure as it went to the public and to history, contained important portions suggested by that able and wise man of God. During all of his Presidency, it was Mr. Lincoln's uniform custom to give careful consideration to the

<sup>16</sup> Recollections of President Lincoln and his Administration, p. 382.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 448-450.

advice and counsels of the ministers of the gospel, and to the decisions of religious bodies.

Mr. Lincoln's great interest in the proposition of Colonel Jaquess to enter upon and prosecute a peace mission was because of his conviction that God might be thus seeking to guide and aid him in his difficult work, by the illumination of His Holy Spirit upon the heart and mind of one of His chosen messengers.

A full account of the Jaquess Mission is given elsewhere in this work, and this reference to that little known but very remarkable portion of history is here given to illustrate Mr. Lincoln's constant reliance upon the favor of God ministered through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

In Mr. Lincoln's proclamations for days of Thanksgiving, humiliation and prayer there are found full and instructive declarations of his belief in the influence of the Holy Spirit. Whatever in those proclamations the President requested the people to ask the Almighty to accomplish could be wrought only by the Holy Spirit. We are not, however, left to any inference respecting this matter for, as will be seen, Mr. Lincoln designates the Holy Spirit as the One by whom the desired results are to be accomplished.

The dates of those Proclamations and the volumes and pages of "Complete Works" where they are published are as follows:

August	12, 1861	.....	Vol. VI., p.	342
July	16, 1863	.....	Vol. IX., p.	32
October	3, 1863	.....	Vol. IX., pp.	151-153
July	7, 1864	.....	Vol. X., pp.	149-150
September	3, 1864	.....	Vol. X., pp.	211-212
October	20, 1864	.....	Vol. X., p.	245

The following is a brief summary of the objects for which President Lincoln, in his Proclamations, requested the people to pray:

“That we may be spared further punishment.  
That our armies may be blessed and made effectual.  
That law and order and peace may be re-established.  
That prayers may bring down plentiful blessings.  
For pardon of national sins.

That by the influence of the Holy Spirit the anger of the insurgents may be subdued.

That the hearts of the insurgents may be changed.

To visit with tender care and consolation those who suffer in mind, body or estate.

To lead the whole nation to union and fraternal peace.

To protect soldiers and other leaders.

To comfort the sick, wounded and prisoners.

To bring blessings for the orphans and widows.

To uphold the government.

To heal the wounds of the nation.

To bring peace, harmony, tranquillity and union.

To have compassion and grant forgiveness.

To suppress the rebellion.

To establish the supremacy of the constitution and laws.

To protect from foreign hostility and interference.

To keep us from obstinate adherence to our own counsels.

To enlighten the mind of the nation to know and to do His will.

To maintain our place as a nation.

To grant courage, power, resistance and endurance.

To soften the hearts, enlighten the minds and quicken the consciences of those in rebellion.

To cause the insurgents to lay down their arms and return to their allegiance to the United States.

To stay the effusion of blood.

To restore fraternity, union, and peace.”

A consideration of these objects for which President Lincoln requested the people to pray will convince any candid mind that he was a firm, unquestioning believer in the power of prayer, and in the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the

hearts and minds of men, and in determining the events of life.

Not less pronounced was Mr. Lincoln's belief in

#### DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

and in the divine supervision of earthly affairs. Of this feature of his faith, Judge Whitney says: "He believed in the direct intervention of God in our national affairs, and he frequently used to ask Him in a direct manly way to grant this boon, avert that disaster, or advise him what to do in a given contingency."<sup>18</sup>

In 1842 when Mr. Lincoln was but thirty-three years old and unmarried, he addressed a letter to his very intimate friend, Joshua F. Speed, in which he expresses his belief in God's personal supervision of individual human lives, in language which most deeply moves the heart of every sympathetic reader. In that letter he declares: "I believe God made me one of the instruments of bringing your Fanny and you together, which union I have no doubt He had foreordained. Whatever He designs He will do for me yet. 'Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord,' is my text just now."<sup>19</sup>

Ten years later, on July 16th, 1852, Mr. Lincoln, in his great eulogy upon Henry Clay, said: "Such a man the times have demanded, and such in the providence of God was given us. But he is gone. Let us strive to deserve, as far as mortals may, the continued care of divine providence, trusting that in future national emergencies He will not fail to provide us the instruments of safety and security."<sup>20</sup>

In 1858 when Mr. Lincoln was engaged in the great struggle with Stephen A. Douglas many leading republicans throughout the nation, and not a few adherents of that party in Illinois, were favoring the re-election of Douglas on account

<sup>18</sup> Lincoln, the Citizen, pp. 206-207.

<sup>19</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. I., pp. 218-219.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Vol. II., p. 177.

of his contest at that time with the Buchanan administration. This was very painful to Mr. Lincoln, and in an address delivered at Chicago on July 10th, 1858, he referred to this fact in the following remarkable language: "As surely as God reigns over you, and has inspired your mind, and given you a sense of propriety, and continues to give you hope, so surely will you still cling to these ideas, and you will at last come back after your wanderings, merely to do your work over again."<sup>21</sup>

In a letter to Mr. H. L. Pierce, April 16th, 1859, Mr. Lincoln expresses his belief in the justice of God and the righteousness of His administration of human affairs in the following expressive utterance: "Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and under a just God, cannot long retain it."<sup>22</sup>

In his famous speech at Springfield on "A House Divided Against Itself," Mr. Lincoln expressed the conviction that slavery would be put "in the way of ultimate extinction"; and as indicating the tenacity with which he clung to the belief that however prolonged or furious the struggle, God's sovereign power would without fail bring about its overthrow, later in the campaign he made the following remarkable pronouncement: "I do not suppose that in the most peaceful way ultimate extinction would occur in less than a hundred years at least; but that it will occur in the best way for both races, in God's own good time, I have no doubt."<sup>23</sup>

During one of the darkest periods of the rebellion Mr. Lincoln thus delivered his soul: "God is leading our Republic in His own time and way to its high destiny, and will deal with it and fulfill every promise to men if the men of our day will but do their duty."<sup>24</sup>

In an address at a fair held in Baltimore, in behalf of

<sup>21</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. III., p. 45.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., Vol. V., p. 126.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., Vol. IV., p. 189.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Browne, Abraham Lincoln and the Men of his Time, Vol. II., p. 378.

the Sanitary Commission, on April 18th, 1864, he said: "So true is it that man proposes and God disposes."<sup>25</sup>

In speaking to Hon. L. E. Chittenden respecting himself as divinely called to the work in which he was engaged Mr. Lincoln said: "That the Almighty does make use of human agencies, and directly intervenes in human affairs, is one of the plainest statements of the Bible. I have had so many evidences of this, so many instances of being ordered by some supernatural power, that I cannot doubt this power is of God."<sup>26</sup>

On September 13th, 1862, in reply to a committee of ministers from Chicago, who urged upon him the policy of Emancipation, he said: "I believe in a divine providence. Unless I am more deceived than I often am I wish to know God's will in this matter. And if I can learn it I will do it. But I hope it will not be irreverent in me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal to others His will concerning my duty, it is quite as probable that He would reveal it directly to me. These are not, however, the days of miracles and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to expect a direct revelation. I must study the plain facts of the case, ascertain what is possible and decide what appears to be wise and right. Whatever shall appear to be God's will I will do."<sup>27</sup>

On May 30th, 1863, in reply to a committee of the Presbyterian General Assembly, Mr. Lincoln said: "From the beginning I saw that the issue of our great struggle depended on the divine interposition and favor. If we had that all would be well. In every case and at all hazards the government must be perpetuated. Relying, as I do, upon the Almighty Power, and encouraged as I am by these resolutions which you have just read, with the support which I receive from Christian men, I shall not hesitate to use all the means at my control to secure the termination of this rebellion and will hope for success."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 77.

<sup>26</sup> Recollections of President Lincoln, p. 450.

<sup>27</sup> Rev. W. W. Patton, D.D., LL.D., President Lincoln and the Chicago Memorial, pp. 20-25.

<sup>28</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 287.

In 1862 Mr. Lincoln in reply to an address from the Society of Friends delivered to him at the White House by a deputation headed by Mrs. Gurney, expressed his confidence in God's sovereignty and supervision in the following beautiful terms:

"In the very responsible position in which I happen to be placed, being a humble instrument in the hands of our heavenly Father, as I am, and as we all are, to work out His great purposes, I have desired that all my works and acts may be according to His will, and that it might be so, I have sought His aid; but if, after endeavoring to do my best in the light which He affords me, I find my efforts fail, I must believe that for some purpose unknown to me, He wills it otherwise. If I had had my way, this war would never have been commenced. If I had been allowed my way, this war would have been ended before this; but we find it still continues, and we must believe that He permits it for some wise purpose of His own, mysterious and unknown to us; and though with our limited understandings we may not be able to comprehend it, yet we cannot but believe that He who made the world still governs it."<sup>29</sup>

The confidence with which Mr. Lincoln claimed to be divinely chosen and commissioned for his great work is indicated by the following disclosures made to Father Chiniquy, whom he had known for many years, and to whom he unreservedly opened his heart when speaking of religious matters: "Let me tell you," he said on one occasion, "that I have lately read a passage in the Old Testament which had made a profound, and I hope, a salutary impression on me. Here is that passage." The President then took his Bible, opened it at the third chapter of Deuteronomy, and read from the 22nd to the 27th verse: "'Ye shall not fear them; for the Lord your God he shall fight for you. And I besought the Lord at that time, saying: O, Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is

<sup>29</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., pp. 50-51.

there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

“ ‘I pray thee, let me go over, and see the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.

“ ‘But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me; let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.

“ ‘Get thee up into the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes; for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.’ ”

And after the President had read these words with great solemnity, he added: “My dear Father Chiniquy, let me tell you that I have read those strange and beautiful words several times, these last five or six weeks. The more I read them, the more, it seems to me, that God has written them for me as well as for Moses.

“Has He not taken me from my poor log cabin, by the hand, as He did of Moses in the reeds of the Nile, to put me at the head of the greatest and most blessed of modern nations just as He put that prophet at the head of the most blessed nation of ancient times? Has not God granted me a privilege, which was not granted to any living man, when I broke the fetters of 4,000,000 men and made them free? Has not our God given me the most glorious victories over my enemies? Are not the armies of the Confederacy so reduced to a handful of men, when compared to what they were two years ago, that the day is fast approaching when they will have to surrender?”<sup>30</sup>

In his “Meditation” which has become so famous, and to which reference already has been made, Mr. Lincoln remarks: “The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite

<sup>30</sup> Fifty Years in the Church of Rome, pp. 706-711.

possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party; and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect His purposes.

"I am almost ready to say that this is probably true; that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet."<sup>31</sup>

The following quotations from letters, official messages, and personal interviews, indicate how fully Mr. Lincoln's hope of divine interposition and aid was connected with a deep sense of human ignorance and helplessness:

August 15, 1855. "Our political problem now is, 'Can we as a nation, continue together permanently, forever, half slave and half free?' The problem is too mighty for me—may God, in His mercy, superintend the solution."<sup>32</sup>

On May 23rd, 1860, in his letter of acceptance addressed to George Ashmun and the Republican National Convention, he writes: "Imploring the assistance of Divine Providence, . . . I am most happy to co-operate for the practical success of the principles declared by the convention."<sup>33</sup>

In a letter to Mr. J. R. Giddings; dated at Springfield, May 21st, 1860, he utters the pious wish: "May the Almighty grant that the cause of truth, justice, and humanity shall in no wise suffer at my hands."<sup>34</sup>

His farewell address at Springfield, on February 11th, 1861, contains the following: "I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail."<sup>35</sup>

From his address to the Ohio Legislature, February 13th, 1861, I make this pertinent quotation: "I turn then and look to the American people, and to that God who has never for-

<sup>31</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., pp. 52-53.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., Vol. II., p. 280.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., Vol. VI., p. 14.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 110-111.

saken them. . . . This is a most consoling circumstance, and from it we may conclude that all we want is time, patience, and a reliance on that God who has never forsaken this people."<sup>36</sup>

And this from his address at Steubenville, Ohio, February 14th, 1861: "Encompassed by vast difficulties as I am, nothing shall be wanting on my part, if sustained by God and the American people."<sup>37</sup>

To the New York legislature, February 18th, 1861, he said: "I still have confidence that the Almighty, the Maker of the Universe, will, through the instrumentality of this great and intelligent people, bring us through this as He has through all the other difficulties of our country. Relying on this, I again thank you for this generous reception."<sup>38</sup>

On February 22nd, 1861, speaking on the occasion of raising a flag over Independence Hall, Philadelphia, he said: "I wish to call your attention to the fact that, under the blessing of God, each additional star added to that flag has given additional prosperity and happiness to this country."<sup>39</sup>

Responding to a deputation of Evangelical Lutherans, May 6th, 1862, he made this deliverance: "You may recollect that in taking up the sword thus forced into our hands, this government appealed to the prayers of the pious and the good, and declared that it placed its whole dependence upon the favor of God. I now humbly and reverently in your presence, reiterate the acknowledgment of that dependence, not doubting that, if it shall please the Divine Being who determines the destinies of nations, this shall remain a united people, and that they will, humbly seeking the Divine guidance, make their prolonged national existence a source of new benefits to themselves and their successors, and to all classes and conditions of mankind."<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. VII., pp. 154-155.

In his reply to the East Baltimore Methodist Conference, May 15th, 1862, he said: "These kind words of approval, coming from so numerous a body of intelligent Christian people, and so free from all sinister motives, are indeed encouraging to me. By the help of an All-wise Providence, I shall endeavor to do my duty and I shall expect the continuance of your prayers for a right solution of our national difficulties and the restoration of our country to peace and prosperity."<sup>41</sup>

Dr. Miner tells us of a heart-revealing moment when in the course of a conversation he asked Mr. Lincoln: "Do you think, judging from your standpoint, that we shall be able to put down this rebellion," and received the answer: "You know I am not of a very hopeful temperament. I can take hold of a thing and hold on a good while, but trusting in God for help and believing that our cause is just and right, I firmly believe that we shall conquer in the end."<sup>42</sup>

As showing how absolute was his dependence upon God we quote these words from a letter to Caleb Russell, January 5th, 1863: "No one is more deeply than myself aware that without His favor our highest wisdom is but as foolishness, and that our most strenuous efforts would avail nothing in the shadow of His displeasure."<sup>43</sup>

In one of the gloomiest hours of the great struggle he said to a delegation of clergymen: "My hope of success in this great and terrible struggle rests on that immutable foundation, the justness and goodness of God. And when events are very threatening, and prospects very dark, I still hope, in some way which men cannot see, all will be well in the end, because our cause is just and God is on our side."<sup>44</sup>

On April 4th, 1864, in a letter to A. E. Hodges and Governor Bramlette of Kentucky, referring to a recent interview, President Lincoln said: "I add a word which was not in the verbal conversation. In telling this tale I attempt no

<sup>41</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., pp. 163-164.

<sup>42</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, pp. 51-52.

<sup>43</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 174.

<sup>44</sup> Life on the Circuit with Lincoln, pp. 290-291.

compliment to my own sagacity. I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me. Now, at the end of three years' struggle, the nation's condition is not what either party or any man desired or expected. God alone can claim it. Whither it is tending seems plain. If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North, as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong, impartial history will find therein new causes to attest and revere the justice and goodness of God."<sup>45</sup>

Hon. James F. Wilson, of Iowa, gives an account of an interview in the White House at which he was present, in which he says:

"The President did not participate in this conversation. He was an attentive listener, but gave no sign of approval or disapproval of the views which were expressed. At length one of the active participants remarked: 'Slavery must be stricken down wherever it exists in this country. It is right that it should be. It is a crime against justice and humanity. We have tolerated it too long. It brought this war upon us. I believe that Providence is not unmindful of the struggle in which this nation is engaged. If we do not do right I believe God will let us go our own way to our ruin. But if we do right, I believe He will lead us safely out of this wilderness, crown our arms with victory, and restore our dissevered Union.'

"I observed President Lincoln closely," says Mr. Wilson, "while this earnest opinion and expression of religious faith was being uttered. I saw that it affected him deeply, and anticipated, from the play of his features and the sparkle of his eyes, that he would not let the occasion pass without making some definite response to it. I was not mistaken. Mr. Lincoln had been sitting in his chair, in a kind of weary and despondent attitude while the conversation progressed. At the conclusion of the remarks I have quoted, he at once arose

<sup>45</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 65.



HON. JAMES F. WILSON OF IOWA



and stood at his extreme height. Pausing a moment, his right arm outstretched towards the gentleman who had just ceased speaking, his face aglow like the face of a prophet, Mr. Lincoln gave deliberate and emphatic utterance to the religious faith which sustained him in the great trial to which he and the country were subjected. He said:

“‘My faith is greater than yours. I not only believe that Providence is not unmindful of the struggle in which this nation is engaged; that if we do not do right God will let us go our own way to our ruin; and that if we do right He will lead us safely out of this wilderness, crown our arms with victory, and restore our dissevered Union, as you have expressed your belief; but I also believe that He will compel us to do right in order that He may do these things, not so much because we desire them as that they accord with His plans of dealing with this nation, in the midst of which He means to establish justice.’

“The manner of this delivery was most impressive, and as Mr. Lincoln resumed his seat he seemed to have recovered from the dejection so apparent when we entered the room. With a reassured tone and manner, he remarked:

“‘The Army of the Potomac is necessary to our success; and though the case at this moment looks dark, I can but hope and believe that we will soon have news from it relieving our present anxiety. Sometimes it seems necessary that we should be confronted with perils which threaten us with disaster in order that we may not get puffed up and forget Him who has much work for us yet to do. I hope our present case is no more than this, and that a bright morning will follow the dark hour that now fills us with alarm. Indeed, my faith tells me it will be so.’ ”<sup>46</sup>

This statement of Hon. James F. Wilson in some respects is in a class by itself. Of all who have testified concerning the declaration of Mr. Lincoln respecting his religious faith none stood upon a higher plane than did this distinguished

<sup>46</sup> Some Memories of Lincoln, *North American Review*, 1896, p. 667.

member of the United States Senate. His rare intellectual gifts and attainments placed him at the head of the committee on judiciary in the National House of Representatives and caused him to be invited by President Grant to accept the position of Secretary of State in his Cabinet, which he declined; and later led the people of Iowa to choose him as one of their representatives in the United States Senate. His ability, learning and rare poise of character caused him to be chosen as one of the managers of the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson, and also to be assigned to the position of railroad commissioner for the United States. His long and distinguished public services, together with his known discretion in speech and act and his devout faith in God give peculiar weight to his testimony respecting the declaration of Mr. Lincoln, as published by him in the *North American Review*.

In this interview President Lincoln went further than in any other in declaring his belief in God's purpose concerning our nation. Many times he had expressed his conviction that "under God" the nation would be granted ultimate victory in its great struggle; but it should not be overlooked, nor lightly considered, that in this interview he not only expressed his belief that God would bless the nation with victory, but he also in clear and unequivocal language stated his conviction that so fixed was the divine purpose to save the nation that since such salvation could be granted only in case of national obedience, the Almighty would apply the rod of chastisement until we as a nation were sufficiently humbled to be able to glorify His name by the victory it was in His heart and purpose to grant. While this conviction is implied in other declarations of Mr. Lincoln, in the Wilson interview it is stated so lucidly and unequivocally as to admit of no misunderstanding whatsoever. President Lincoln's profound faith in the overruling providence of God in all our national affairs should be kept constantly in mind while considering the other statement of his convictions concerning the rule of God over the affairs of men.

His belief in the sovereignty of God does not in the least conflict with his belief in the free agency of man, as evidenced by the following excerpt from his annual message to Congress of December 1st, 1862, in connection with his plea for the adoption of a policy of emancipation: "We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of earth. Other means may succeed; this could not fail. The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just—a way which, if followed, the world will forever applaud, and God must forever bless."<sup>47</sup>

The distinctive features of Mr. Lincoln's religio-political faith was his belief in

#### RETRIBUTIVE DIVINE JUSTICE.

That belief rested upon his firm conviction that right is sure to receive divine approval and reward, while wrong is not permitted to go unpunished. His belief in personal and individual responsibility to God was coupled with his knowledge that governments are persons with wills, freedom of choice and accountability to their divine Author.

Mr. Lincoln also understood and seems never to have doubted nor forgotten that the sins of individual people, when authorized, sanctioned or tolerated by government, become also national sins and incur national punishment. Hence, believing as he did, that slavery was a great wrong he also and necessarily believed that the government's complicity in that wrong, if continued, would inevitably bring upon the nation the severe judgments of the Almighty. And to avert that calamity seems to have been the chief purpose of Mr. Lincoln's strenuous efforts for the "ultimate extinction" of slavery.

He was greatly disturbed and made "miserable," as he said, by witnessing or contemplating the cruelties of slavery and the sufferings of the slaves. But he was more than disturbed, he was terrified, when, with the foresight of an inspired

<sup>47</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 131.

prophet he saw the day of divine wrath approaching and the severe punishment and peril of the nation for its part in that great transgression.

Patriotism was the dominant feature of his philanthropy and the perils of the nation disturbed him far more than the sufferings of the slaves, though he was keenly sensitive to all human afflictions. He was comforted by his belief in God's merciful dealings with individual transgressors but his soul was in agony when he contemplated the government's complicity with slavery and remembered that the punishment of nations for their sins is always administered in this life and with great severity. Therefore, he could truly say, as for the same reason Jefferson said: "I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just." And some of Mr. Lincoln's vehement and impassioned utterances respecting the nation's expiation of its sinful complicity with slavery caused the foregoing declaration of Jefferson to appear very mild and moderate.

On the 16th of September, 1859,—the year following his great debates with Douglas and the year preceding his election as President,—in a speech at Columbus, Ohio, he said: "There was danger to this country, danger of the avenging justice of God, in that little unimportant popular sovereignty question of Judge Douglas. He supposed there was a question of God's eternal justice wrapped up in the enslaving of any race of men, or any man, and that those who did so braved the arm of Jehovah—that when a nation thus dared the Almighty, every friend of that nation had cause to dread His wrath."<sup>48</sup>

In October, 1860, only a few days before his election as President, when during the famous "Bateman interview" he learned that of the twenty-three pastors in Springfield, his home city, only three were known to be in favor of his election, he exclaimed: "It seems as if God had borne with this thing (slavery) until the very teachers of religion have come to defend it from the Bible and to claim for it a divine character

<sup>48</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. V., pp. 159-160.



H. W. Smith, N. Y.

*A. Bateman*



and sanction. And now the cup of iniquity is full and the vials of wrath will be poured out."

During the interview at which Mr. Lincoln made this remarkable declaration Dr. Newton Bateman, superintendent of the Public Schools of Illinois, and Mr. Lincoln's very close personal friend, was his only companion. The national campaign which resulted in his first election as President was at a high point of interest and activity. Elections in the "October States"—Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania—had been held and indicated almost to a certainty that a few days later Mr. Lincoln would be triumphantly elected President. It was at the end of a very busy day and the last caller had left the Capitol building, in which the Presidential candidate occupied rooms during the campaign, and in this seclusion these two devoted friends engaged in heart to heart consultation concerning the attitude of their neighbors and especially of the ministers and church people toward the Presidential candidates. Very carefully and for an extended period they examined the pages of the polling list which his supporters had prepared and as Mr. Lincoln came to realize that standing for freedom as he did he was opposed by "the teachers of righteousness" as he designated them, he seems to have had a prophet's vision of the approaching judgments of God as he gave vent to the agony of his soul in the most startling declarations he had ever uttered.

Dr. Holland in giving an account of this interview tells us that Mr. Lincoln's agitation was such as Dr. Bateman had never before witnessed in him. He moved about the room with rapid, nervous strides, uttering lamentations which seemed inadequate to express the depths of his emotions. It was not anger but anguish, not pride but pity that burned with volcanic violence in his soul in the seclusion of that upper chamber in the Capitol at Springfield. The bright star of his own personal triumph at the coming election, though rising in glorious splendor, was for the time unseen and forgotten as

in vision he beheld the storm-cloud of divine wrath filling all the heavens.

"He seemed especially impressed," says Dr. Holland, "with the solemn grandeur of portions of Revelation describing the wrath of Almighty God, and repeatedly referred to his conviction that the day of wrath was at hand and would issue in the overthrow of slavery." Mr. Lincoln's manner and declarations upon that occasion filled Dr. Bateman with astonishment and indicated the violence of the storm that was raging in his soul.

It is not difficult to understand Dr. Bateman's astonishment at Mr. Lincoln's manner and statements for upon no other occasion is he known to have been so tremendously agitated or to have given utterance to such alarming apprehensions as during that memorable interview. There were other occasions upon which he was deeply stirred but never as far as known, save at that time, did he manifest his perturbed condition in the presence of another person. Once during the debates with Douglas he was aroused to the verge of anger but his words, though exceedingly forceful, seem to have been chosen with care and spoken without bitterness. He was overwhelmed with grief when death invaded his family circle in the White House but he wept in silence or gave expression to his sorrow in words of touching tenderness. He was shocked and bewildered by the disastrous defeat at Chancellorsville, but no moan or word of complaint mingled with the sound of his footsteps as in the seclusion of his private chamber he marched to and fro during all the weary watches of that woeful night.

Upon all these and similar occasions his self-restraint was marvelous, but somehow during the Bateman interview the anguish of his soul burst through his habitual restraint and found expression in acts and utterances peculiar to that one occasion. So appalling was the vision he then beheld that his cry of terror rang out upon the night as did the solemn warnings of Jeremiah when by inspiration he beheld the gathering and approaching storm of retribution which came

upon ancient Israel. It was the appalling vision of the coming judgments of the Almighty which caused Abraham Lincoln, upon that occasion, to appear, act and speak as he did at no other time. Jeremiah's lamentations were the outpouring of his loyal and loving soul when in prophetic vision he saw the bitter humiliation and sufferings of the seventy years of captivity in Babylon, and like those woeful warnings of "The Weeping Prophet" were the utterances of Abraham Lincoln when he amazed Dr. Bateman by the vehement declaration of his heart-breaking vision of the turpitude of the nation's sins and the fearful judgments of God. With the vision of a seer he beheld the coming calamity, and with the voice of a prophet he uttered his solemn warnings. He was, for a time, in the realm of spiritual illumination and his words have all the distinctive characteristics of divine inspiration. It was this, which at the time, so impressed Dr. Bateman and which ever since has given such peculiar significance to the words he uttered at that time.

But great as was his agony and pathetic as were his exclamations when he saw the storm approaching he uttered no murmur or cry of pain when his predictions were fulfilled and the rod of righteous retribution fell upon the nation.

We shall not understand Abraham Lincoln, as we should, if we fail to note the significant contrast between his agitation during the Bateman interview and his humble submission to the divine judgments when they came and the heroic fortitude with which he endured the severe chastisement of the Almighty during all of his Presidential term. His proclamations calling the people to penitence and prayer are dominated by a gentle and submissive spirit. He did not forget nor would he permit the people to forget "that by His divine law nations like individuals are subjected to punishment and chastisements in this world," and "that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be but a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins."

With the tenderness of a loving father he admonished the people "to recognize the hand of God in this terrible visitation and in sorrowful remembrance of our faults and crimes as a nation," "to bow in humble submission to His chastisements, to confess and deplore their sins and transgressions," "to pray that we may be spared further punishment though most justly deserved." The proclamations of President Lincoln from which these selections are taken were written by one whose soul was saturated with the letter of encouragement and counsel which Jeremiah sent to his brethren in captivity admonishing them cheerfully to submit to the divine judgments, fervently to pray for and confidently to expect the promised deliverance. Jeremiah said, "For I know the thoughts that I have toward you saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you hope in your latter end." Lincoln asked the people to pray "humbly believing that it is in accordance with His will that our place should be maintained as a united people among the families of nations."

Jeremiah, speaking for the Almighty, said: "Ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."<sup>49</sup>

Lincoln counselled the people "to rest in the hope authorized by the divine teachings that the united cry of the nation will be heard on high and answered" by "the restoration of our divided and suffering country to its former happy condition of unity and peace."

The foregoing selections from President Lincoln's proclamations glow with intense religious fervor but there is no flame of passion as was sometimes the case when he discussed the subject of retributive divine justice in private conversation with trusted personal friends. When free from the restraints under which important state papers are prepared, Mr. Lincoln, in discussing this question assumed a manner and employed language which disclosed the great depth of his feelings on the

<sup>49</sup> Jer. 29: 12, 13.

subject, and bore witness to his prolonged meditation upon God's dealings with nations in this world for their complicity in wrong.

It would be difficult to find in literature anything more pathetic than the following statements of President Lincoln in a private conversation with Father Chiniquy during the dark days of the war: "My God alone knows what I have already suffered for my dear country's sake. But my fear is that the justice of God is not yet paid. When I look upon the rivers of tears and blood drawn by the lashes of the merciless masters from the veins of the very hearts of those millions of defenseless slaves, these two hundred years; when I remember the agonies, the cries, the unspeakable tortures of those people to which I have to some extent connived with so many others a part of my life, I fear that we are still far from the complete expiation. For the judgments of God are true and righteous."<sup>50</sup>

In the light of this lava-flow of impassioned utterances the greatness of Abraham Lincoln is revealed. The greatness of Socrates was revealed by his behavior under suffering, but he suffered alone while millions of Lincoln's beloved countrymen were with him in the furnace of affliction. Socrates was great when he calmly drank the poisonous hemlock; Lincoln was more than great when, with equal tranquillity, he emptied to its dregs the bitter cup of suffering which was pressed to his lips and wept in sympathy as he heard the groans of his fellow sufferers and realized that their chastisement was just and righteous altogether.

And in unstudied and forceful language which would not have been suitable in an official document Mr. Lincoln in this very remarkable private interview disclosed the dominance in his thought of God's dealings with nations for their transgressions. He had given much thought during earlier years to the evil character of slavery but at the time of this interview with Father Chiniquy his mind seems to have dwelt upon

<sup>50</sup> Fifty Years in the Church of Rome, pp. 706-711.

the sovereignty of God and His gracious though very severe administration of retributive justice.

The progress of the war and the increase of the sufferings and sorrow which it caused were to Mr. Lincoln a constant disclosure of the hand of God in executing the penalty of His violated law. Other governmental matters required and received his attention but they could not crowd back from the forefront of his thought the retributive judgments of the Almighty. If any extended declaration of his failed to mention this matter he seemed to regard it as an omission which should be explained or supplied. An illustration of this is seen in the famous Bramlette-Dixon interview and letter. Early in April, 1864, Governor Bramlette, Senator Dixon and Dr. Hodges of Kentucky had an interview with the President during which Mr. Lincoln discussed the question of slavery with such superb wisdom that he was requested to commit his statements to writing which he did in a letter to Dr. Hodges dated April 4th, 1864. In that letter Mr. Lincoln, after repeating the lucid and comprehensive statement of his attitude to slavery, which he had given at the interview a few days before, remembering that during that interview he had made no reference to the subject of retribution, added the words already quoted in this chapter.

Remembering that the letter to A. G. Hodges was written eleven months before Mr. Lincoln delivered his second inaugural address, it will be seen how even at that early day his mind and soul were being saturated with the subject which was the chief theme of that greatest of all literary productions. "The rivers of tears and blood" of which he spoke so pathetically to Father Chiniquy, seem to have haunted his vision until he saw them swallowed up in the crimson tide which "the judgments of the Lord" demanded as an expiation of the nation's sins.

It is fortunate that with Mr. Lincoln's great intellectual power there was united a heart of boundless sympathy and tenderness, thus giving to his personality a fine sense of

balance. His legal studies and training led him to recognize the immutable law of divine retribution; but with this feature of his faith, there was associated a strong belief in

#### DIVINE COMPASSION AND MERCY

Mr. Lincoln was always distinguished for rare tenderness of heart and sympathy with all who were suffering or in need. When but a child it was his custom, if he was not in attendance upon public worship on the Lord's day, to gather his playmates about him and to discourse to them after the fashion of a preacher; and on such occasions he always admonished them to be kind to all their associates and even to dumb animals. The characteristics of his nature thus exhibited increased with his growth in stature, and in personal character. As early as 1851, in the familiar letter to his stepbrother relative to his father's illness he speaks of the Almighty as "our great and good and merciful Maker."<sup>51</sup>

In his great speech at Springfield, on July 17th, 1858, he made a telling point against Judge Douglas, who was seeking to win the votes of the antislavery people by saying: "Repentance before forgiveness is a provision of the Christian system, and on that condition alone will the republicans grant him forgiveness."<sup>52</sup>

That conception of the divine compassion and mercy which was so dominant in Mr. Lincoln's faith, is stated with great clearness and force in portions of his proclamations for a day of Thanksgiving.

In the Proclamation of August 12th, 1861, appointing "A Day of Public Prayer, Humiliation and Fasting," he invites the people "to acknowledge and revere the Supreme Government of God; to bow in humble submission to His chastisement; to confess and deplore their sins and transgressions in the full conviction that the fear of the Lord is the beginning

<sup>51</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., p. 158.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., Vol. III., p. 167.

of wisdom; and to pray with all fervency and contrition for the pardon of their past offenses. In soulful remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves before Him, and to pray for His mercy—to pray that we may be spared further punishment though most justly deserved.”<sup>53</sup>

On March 30th, 1863, he appointed “A day for national prayer and humiliation,” calling upon the people “to confess their sins and transgressions with humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon. To humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.”<sup>54</sup>

On October 3rd, 1863, in his proclamation appointing a day of Thanksgiving and prayer, in speaking of the great favors which had been bestowed upon the nation, he said: “No human counsel hath devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things; they are gracious gifts of the most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins hath nevertheless remembered mercy.”<sup>55</sup>

On October 20th, 1864, in the last Proclamation which he issued appointing a day of annual Thanksgiving he admonishes the people “that on that occasion they do reverently humble themselves in the dust, and from thence offer up penitent and fervent prayers.”<sup>56</sup>

Mr. Lincoln’s regard for

#### THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

is sufficiently expressed in the following order: “Order for Sabbath Observance, Executive Mansion, Washington, Nov. 15th, 1862.

“The President, Commander-in-Chief of the army and

<sup>53</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., pp. 341-343.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., Vol. VIII., pp. 235-237.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., Vol. IX., p. 152.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., Vol. X., p. 246.

navy, desires and enjoins the orderly observance of the Sabbath by the officers and men in the military and naval service. The importance for man and beast of the prescribed weekly rest, the sacred rights of Christian soldiers, and sailors, a becoming deference to the best sentiment of a Christian people, and a due regard for the Divine Will, demand that Sunday labor in the army and navy be reduced to the measure of strict necessity. The discipline and character of the national forces should not suffer, nor the cause they defend be imperilled, by the profanation of the day or name of the Most High. 'At this time of public distress,' adopting the words of Washington in 1776, 'men may find enough to do in the service of God and their country without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality.' The first general order issued by the Father of his country after the Declaration of Independence indicates the spirit in which our institutions were founded and should ever be defended. 'The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country.' <sup>57</sup>

### THE CHURCH

Nothing was more manifest in Mr. Lincoln's life and in his teachings than his firm and constant belief in the Church as a divine institution. In early life his lot was cast with the Methodists and Baptists, but during his life in Springfield and at Washington, his personal denominational preferences were with the Presbyterians. He was a regular and interested worshipper in that denomination both at his home city and at the National Capital. He was also strongly attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church because of its spirituality, its cordial fellowship, its great numerical strength and its consequent large contribution to the needs of the government during all the years of his Presidency. This is felicitously expressed in the following reply to a Methodist delegation,

<sup>57</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., pp. 76-77.

May 14th, 1864: "It is no fault in others that the Methodist Church sends more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to heaven than any. God bless the Methodist Church. Bless all the churches, and blessed be God, who, in this our great trial, giveth us the churches."<sup>58</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's views respecting the justification for the existence of so many religious denominations is expressed in the following portions of his statements on that subject to a company of friends and reported by Dr. Robert Browne, as follows:

"In one of his cheeriest moods, one day, I remember, the subject of the many Protestant sects was being considered and talked over. One good old brother, a kind-hearted man, and as timid, lamented the number of sects, and hoped that some day a harmonizing spirit would prevail among all Christian believers, and that all of them would unite in one Church organization to serve the Master. Mr. Lincoln said: "My good brother, you are all wrong. The more sects we have, the better. They are all getting somebody in that the others could not; and even with the numerous divisions we are all doing tolerably well.

"It is not a certainty by any means that a quiet time is the best for progress. It is not so by any means in the progress of human liberty or the release of men from superstition and persecution under the forms of religion. The greatest achievements have always come in stirring, fighting times, like those of Luther, Cromwell, and the American revolution. What we need is not fewer sects or parties, but more freedom and independence for those we have. The sects are all right and will get through all right in the end. God is going to be more merciful to men trying to do right than most people think. He is so much more familiar with human frailties than a little sect in any single organization can be, that there is scarcely room for doubt that He will deal more gently with blundering, sinning humanity than the sects would deal with

<sup>58</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 100.

one another. I would rather there were more than less, if one were to hold all the power.

"Yet sects are right, and should hammer away until they reach the best that is attainable. God intends that men should fight their way to better conditions, and not be lazy or timid, or expect that their passage would be an easy one through the world or beyond in ignorant idleness. We are often confronted with the fear of too many sects, as so many timid people among them so often dread, and wonder which is right and which is best among them. They are all right.

"Think of the sect drilling so many of us have passed through, mostly to our advantage, as responsible beings. Our people came from the good old Quaker stock, through Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky. Circumstances took us into the Baptist sect in Indiana, in which several of our people have remained. While there, a good Methodist elder rode forty miles through a winter storm out of his way to preach my mother's funeral sermon at Spencer Creek. Here in Illinois we are with the Presbyterians, where the Methodists are as thick as bees all about us."<sup>59</sup>

Mr. Lincoln believed in

#### SALVATION BY FAITH IN CHRIST

This was indicated by many and very significant references to the Saviour, and the marked reverence and affection with which that name was always spoken by him. In earlier days he had been closely associated with Major Merwin in the temperance work in Illinois and always manifested deep sympathy with and interest in the gospel features of that work. Because of that interest he afterwards afforded Major Merwin every desirable opportunity to visit the front during the war to induce soldiers to abstain from intoxicants and to become Christians.

In the case of Colonel Loomis, elsewhere referred to, Mr.

<sup>59</sup> Abraham Lincoln and the Men of his Time, Vol. II., pp. 427-428.

Lincoln was disinclined to retain him in the position which he held until he learned of the religious work he always had conducted among the men under his command; when he remarked that this was "his highest possible recommendation."

According to the statement of Mrs. Rebecca Pomeroy, who was for fourteen weeks a nurse in the White House, the President frequently accompanied her upon her visitations to the hospitals, and would never permit her to pass over the religious exercises which formed part of her work, but always listened with close and constant attention while she pointed afflicted and suffering soldiers to Jesus Christ as the only one in whom they could find salvation, and from whom there could be administered to them consolation and comfort.

Mrs. Pomeroy in her very interesting and instructive record of the events of those weeks says that Mr. Lincoln, in a conversation with her at the White House, inquired with great diligence and minuteness concerning her methods of communicating to the soldiers the gospel message, and the evidence of their acceptance of the Saviour.

Mr. Lincoln accepted without qualification the doctrine of

#### PERSONAL REGENERATION.

The work of grace to which the Saviour referred when he said, "Ye must be born anew" (John 3:7), to which the Apostle referred when he said, "If any man is in Christ he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17), that work which Mr. Lincoln designated as "a change of heart," was to his mind clearly taught by reason and Revelation. All that Mr. Lincoln is known to have said respecting his own religious experiences and standing bears witness to his settled conviction that personal regeneration is included in the work of saving grace and is indispensable to salvation. His carefully guarded expressions of uncertainty as to "the precise time" when he was the recipient of that gracious work of the Holy Spirit, and experienced "a change of heart," as he termed it, and his later

more definite declarations relative to the same matter give assurance of his recognition of the necessity for such an experience. His occasional reference to this matter indicates that he supposed his belief in the doctrine of regeneration was understood as a matter of course. This is confirmed by his statements which appear in later pages of this volume.

## IV

### LINCOLN'S FAITH IN PRAYER

**I**N his statement before quoted Mr. Roosevelt employs a very unusual word when he says, "Lincoln studied the Bible until he mastered it absolutely." It is not often that any one is credited with having "mastered" a great literary production, yet in a carefully prepared address upon an important occasion, when as chief magistrate of the nation he occupied a position which caused his words to have peculiar weight, Mr. Roosevelt declared that Lincoln had "mastered absolutely" the greatest book in existence.

Mr. Lincoln's methods of study were calculated to accomplish the result here claimed for him by the former President. He was always thorough in his examination of every subject that he deemed worthy of consideration. He carefully read, diligently studied and pondered over volumes which others hastily perused. Thus he became able to repeat verbatim extended passages from books and other publications upon which he had bestowed absorbing attention. By the same painstaking methods he studied the Bible and by so doing he came into that sublime and beautiful faith in prayer which for more than half a century has been the marvel of the world.

When Mr. Lincoln discovered a very skillfully constructed plot to secure by perjury a verdict against his client in the case he was conducting for Father Chiniquy, he said: "The only way to be sure of a favorable verdict tomorrow is that God Almighty will take our part and show your innocence. Go to Him and pray for He alone can save you." At three o'clock, the next morning, Mr. Lincoln came to Father Chiniquy's room, and finding him in agonizing and tearful prayer, merrily exclaimed: "Cheer up, their diabolical plot is all known and if

they do not fly away before the dawn of day they will surely be lynched. Bless the Lord, you are saved."

A little later, while in conversation with Father Chiniquy, he said: "The way you have been saved when, I confess it again, I thought everything was nearly lost, is one of the most extraordinary occurrences I ever saw. It makes me remember what I have too often forgotten and what my mother often told me when young—that our God is a prayer-hearing God. This good thought sown into my young heart by that dear mother's hand was in my mind when I told you to go and pray. But I confess to you that I had not faith enough to believe that your prayer would be so quickly and so marvelously answered."<sup>1</sup>

#### HE ASKED FOR PRAYERS

A sincere, earnest request to be remembered and mentioned in the prayers which others offer should be regarded as quite as pronounced an expression of faith in the efficacy of prayer as could be stated in human language. With some it means but little to make a request for prayer, but such was not the case with Abraham Lincoln. He was a man of such proportions, so broad and generous in his human sympathies, so profound and earnest in his regard for sacred things, and so absolutely sincere, that for him to express a desire to be remembered in the prayers of others, meant all that was in his power to express. The record of his eventful life is marked by many such requests. Some of these will be stated in this connection, and I must begin by asking the reader to stand with me, in imagination, in the dampness and falling snow of that 11th of February, 1861, when Mr. Lincoln bade adieu to his friends and neighbors as he started on his journey to Washington for his inauguration as President, and hear him say: "To His care commending you, as I trust in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell."

<sup>1</sup> Fifty Years in the Church of Rome, pp. 657, 658, 662.

Mr. Lincoln had just been speaking of the assurance of God's presence and of His all-sufficient helpfulness given to Washington and those associated with him; and realizing, as he did, and as he most beautifully stated, his own utter unfitness for the great task before him he turned with all the simplicity and solemn earnestness of a devout and spiritually enlightened soul to the one only source of help in times of need. His whole confidence was in God and with all his heart and soul he believed in the efficacy of prayer in securing divine assistance. He believed in his neighbors and friends who stood before him and in the potency of their prayers. His heart yearned to be remembered by them when they were interceding with God for the imperilled nation. But let us not forget that while his heart was yearning for remembrance in their prayers, he did not, and could not forget that they, too, were in need of the presence and blessing of Omnipotence. And this doubtless brought him unconsciously to an expression of his belief in what is known as "communion in intercession."

"There is a place where spirits blend,  
Where friend holds fellowship with friend,  
Though sundered far, by faith they meet,  
Around one common Mercy-seat."

When interceding for a common cause we have fellowship in prayer sweet, and comforting. But it was something more personal, more inexpressibly precious, that Mr. Lincoln had in mind. What was in his thought is often expressed in devotional conferences and testimonies. No doubt Mr. Lincoln, on many occasions, at social religious services which he frequently attended, had heard the request and promise: "I hope to be remembered in your prayers and I will not forget you when I pray." The thought expressed in that very common statement was the thought which Mr. Lincoln clothed in such incomparably beautiful language, in the closing passage of that farewell address.

To doubt that his soul was full to overflowing of the sacred sentiments which those words expressed; to doubt his belief that in answer to the prayers of the people from whom he was taking his final leave much good could and would come to him which otherwise might not be received; to doubt his own firm faith that God would, in answer to his own prayers, minister good to those from whom he was about to be separated, is to dishonor the name of Abraham Lincoln and to commit an unspeakable offense against the sacred truth of which he was a living personification.

If nothing else than this beautiful and gracious request had ever been spoken or written by Abraham Lincoln respecting the subject of prayer, humanity would stand uncovered in his presence, overawed by his sublime and abiding faith in God and in scriptural intercession. With bated breath an anxious world listened to those words, moved as it at no other time had been with the realization that God's chosen man was responding to the divine call and going forth to tasks as great as any which in the past had engaged the efforts of others, and more difficult than any which the foremost of his contemporaries could perform. And in harmony with this avowal of his own longing for the fellowship of intercession, and his confidence in prayer, there came from his lips and pen, as the years went by, and difficulties accumulated, and darkness gathered, expressions of a faith that never faltered through all the years of his earthly life.

To the multitudes that came to meet him as he passed through the great centers on his journey to the Capital, he spoke in terms and tones befitting such a chieftain at such a crisis, and at every point he turned the thought of those who heard him to the ability of God to save the nation, and to His willingness to do so in answer to the supplications of the people.

As Mr. Lincoln stood erect and hopeful, although in the agony of ever-darkening apprehensions, he directed the thought of the American people to the importance of seeking and

striving to merit and secure the gracious favor of Almighty God as in the following impressive words of his first official declaration: "Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present needs."

During the months and years that followed, the President's calls of the nation to their knees in prayer were frequent and urgent. In many ways he expressed his desire to be remembered in the prayers of praying people. To Hon. L. E. Chittenden, one of his trusted counsellors, he said: "It makes me stronger and more confident to know that all Christians in the loyal states are praying for our success, that all their influences are working to the same end. Thousands of them are fighting for us, and no one will say that an officer or a private is less brave because he is a praying soldier."

Dr. William H. Roberts states that during eighteen months while a soldier in the Union Army and stationed at Washington, he often saw President Lincoln at the prayer meeting of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, sometimes in the lecture room, and at other times in the pastor's study to avoid having his hour of prayer interrupted by persons seeking governmental favor.

A clergyman from New York during a call at the White House said: "I have not come to ask any favors of you, Mr. President, I have only come to say that the loyal people of the North are sustaining you and will continue to do so. We are giving you all that we have,—the lives of our sons as well as our confidence and our prayers. You must know that no pious father or mother ever kneels in prayer these days without asking God to give you strength and wisdom.

"The tears filled Lincoln's eyes as he thanked his visitor and said: 'But for those prayers I should have faltered and perhaps failed long ago. Tell every father and mother you know to keep on praying and I will keep on fighting, for I know that God is on our side.'

"As the clergyman started to leave the room, Lincoln held him by the hand and said: 'I suppose I may consider this a sort of pastoral call.'

" 'Yes,' replied the clergyman.

" 'Out in our country,' continued Lincoln, 'when a parson makes a pastoral call it was always the custom for the folks to ask him to lead in prayer, and I should like to ask you to pray with me today; pray that I may have strength and wisdom.' The two men knelt side by side before a settee and the clergyman offered the most fervent appeal to the Almighty Power that ever fell from his lips. As they arose, Lincoln grasped his visitor's hand and remarked in a satisfied sort of way,—

" 'I feel better.' ”<sup>2</sup>

No father will fail to feel strong heart throbs of tender sympathy as he peruses the following statement by Mrs. Pomeroy, the army nurse who ministered to the Lincoln family at the time of Willie's death: "The third day, and the sick one's better, he had to go into his office, for he had not been there for several days. Looking on the little sufferer he said: 'I hope you will pray for him and if it is God's will, that he may be spared. And also pray for me, for I need the prayers of many.' The fourth day and the sad duty done, that of laying his dear son 'Willie' out of sight, my heart prompted me to say, 'Look up for strength,' and he kindly answered, 'I will go to God with my sorrows.' ”<sup>3</sup>

Never in personal conversation did Abraham Lincoln rise to a higher level than when he thus humbled himself before his God and became, for the time, naught else but a sinful mortal in need of human intercession and divine grace. It was no hard task requiring special effort for the President to issue a proclamation asking the people to unite in prayer for the nation, for the army, and for the government; but to say, "Pray for *me*," was a heroic act which few men in like position

<sup>2</sup> The True Abraham Lincoln, pp. 383-384.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, p. 54.

ever have achieved. How closely this request of Mr. Lincoln resembles that of the great Apostle in his letter to the Ephesians, when he says: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit . . . for all saints and for me also" (Eph. 6: 18-19); just as his request for the prayers of his neighbors in his farewell address at Springfield resembles the words of Paul to the Church at Rome, "Strive together with me in your prayers to God for me."<sup>4</sup>

Respecting Mr. Lincoln's faith in prayer, and his interest in a personal religious experience, Mrs. Pomeroy, through William M. Thayer, places the world under obligations by the following statements:

"He inquired very minutely into the method of speaking with sick and dying soldiers—what she said to them—how they answered her—how many of them became Christians? He accompanied her many times to the hospital and witnessed her effective management and talked with the soldiers and encouraged them. On learning that the managers of the hospital, who were Roman Catholics, had forbidden the Protestant nurses to pray with the soldiers, or read the Bible to them, he promptly removed the restriction, and allowed Christian women henceforth to hold prayer meetings, read the Bible to the 'boys' and pray with them, as much as they pleased, adding: 'If there was more praying and less swearing it would be far better for our country, and we all need to be prayed for, officers as well as privates, and if I was near death I think I should like to hear prayer.'"<sup>5</sup>

#### MANY PRAYED FOR HIM

Next to his own pastor, the Rev. N. W. Miner, D.D., pastor of the First Baptist Church, Springfield, Illinois, may be regarded as having been Mr. Lincoln's most highly esteemed friend and counsellor in religious matters. Their re-

<sup>4</sup> Romans 15: 30.

<sup>5</sup> William M. Thayer, *From Pioneer to White House*, p. 353.

lation of personal friendship extended over a period of many years and any word of information from Dr. Miner respecting Mr. Lincoln is of special value. There is, therefore, peculiar interest in the following:

"In the early part of the winter of 1861, a meeting was held in the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, and was largely attended by the most respectable and best people of the city. Many fervent prayers were offered for our beloved country, and for the man whom Providence had raised up to guide the ship of state over a rough and stormy sea. Mr. Lincoln listened attentively to the earnest prayers which were made with thrilling interest. At the close of the meeting I passed down the aisle in which he was standing and taking me by the hand he said, with deep emotion: 'Mr. Miner, this has been a good meeting. I hardly know how it could have been made better. I feel very grateful for the prayers offered in my behalf and hope they may be answered.'"<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's expression of appreciation of the services above mentioned is an unqualified declaration of his interest in the prayer service of the church.

In the following Dr. Miner tells of another conversation with Mr. Lincoln, at the White House:

"During my visit I said to him: 'Well, Mr. Lincoln, you have this encouragement. Christian people all over the country are praying for you as they never prayed for mortal man before.'

" 'I believe that,' he said, 'and this is an encouraging thought to me. If I were not sustained by the prayers of God's people I could not endure the constant pressure. I should give up hoping for success.'"<sup>7</sup>

The following is of rare value because it contains a very significant statement of Mr. Lincoln's estimate of secret prayer, and also because it comes from one of his most esteemed and cherished friends:

"When reminded that he was daily remembered by those

<sup>6</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, pp. 51-52.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

who prayed 'not to be heard of men,' as no man ever had before been remembered, he caught at the homely phrase and said, 'Yes, I like that phrase "not to be heard of men," and guess it is generally true as you say. At least I have been told so and I have been a great deal helped by just that thought.'"<sup>8</sup>

To the same effect is the following:

"Prayer can do what armies cannot," suggested Mrs. Pomeroy; "and never were so many prayers offered for a country as are offered for ours, and never so many offered for a ruler as are offered for you, Mr. President."

"I know it," answered Mr. Lincoln, deeply moved by the thought; "and it is great encouragement to me. Our cause is righteous, and I do believe that God will give us the victory; but this slaughtering of men is dreadful for both sides."<sup>9</sup>

On the morning of Willie's funeral, Mrs. Pomeroy expressed her deep sympathy for him, and called his attention to the many prayers going up for him. "I am glad to hear that," he answered wiping away his tears; "I want they should pray for me. I need their prayers. I will try to go to God with my sorrows."<sup>10</sup>

It would be impossible to exaggerate the significance in this connection of the following charming incident:

"The last week in January, 1864, the Sanitary Commission held a four days' session in Washington, at the conclusion of which between forty and fifty of the ladies went in a body to call upon the President. As related by one of the ladies present, he took each by the hand in the usual perfunctory manner, until it became the turn of a little Quaker lady from Philadelphia.

"She had to rise on tiptoe to reach his hand. As she did so her voice uttered some words I did not catch but their effect I saw.

"As when lights suddenly blaze behind a cathedral's win-

<sup>8</sup> Noah Brooks, in *Harper's Magazine* for July, 1865, p. 226.

<sup>9</sup> From *Pioneer Home to White House*, pp. 349-350.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 351.

dows, flashing beauty where was but formless dullness, so the soul of light illuminated these rugged features and poured from the wonderful eyes. The gaunt and bent form straightened, even the angles seemed to fill out and cause the figure to assume the proportions which nature had intended. The mouth became even beautiful in its sweetness. As the transfigured face bent above the upturned bonnet of the little Quaker lady, whose features it hid from us, a stream of blessing seemed to flow from his face to hers.

"While he still held her hand she said to him: 'Yes, Friend Abraham, thee need not think thee stands alone. We are all praying for thee. All our hearts, the hearts of all the people are behind thee, and thee cannot fail. The Lord has appointed thee, the Lord will sustain thee, and the people love thee. Yea, as no other man was ever loved before does this people love thee. We are only a few weak women, but we represent many. Take comfort, Friend Abraham, God is with thee. The people are behind thee.'

" 'I know it,' replied Mr. Lincoln, the great soft voice rolling solemnly and sweetly forth from the trembling lips; 'I know it. If I did not have that knowledge, it is not hope, it is knowledge, the knowledge that God is sustaining and will sustain me until my appointed work is done, I could not live. If I did not believe that the hearts of loyal people were with me, I could not endure it. My heart would have broken long ago. It is that blessed knowledge and that blessed relief that holds me to my work. This has been a sad day, and I was almost overwhelmed when you came in. You have given a cup of cold water to a very thirsty and grateful man. Ladies, you have done me a great kindness today. I knew it before. I knew that good men and women were praying for me, but I was so tired I had almost forgotten. God bless you all.' "<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Helen Everston Smith, one of the commissioners, in *The Independent*, 1900, pp. 435-436.

## PRAYER WITH HIM

It is difficult to believe that at a time when the nation's life was in such great peril, leading men at Washington, and in other parts of the country were engaged in a conspiracy to give aid and comfort to those who were in rebellion and to make more difficult the efforts which were being made to preserve the Union.

But such was the case as all know who are at all familiar with the history of those times. At one of the meetings held by the leaders of that disloyal movement, as was usual at such gatherings, Mr. Lincoln was denounced with great vehemence and malignity. After listening to those denunciations for a time one of their number arose and said:

"I was up at the White House, having called to see the President on business. I was shown into the office of his private secretary, and told that Mr. Lincoln was busy just then, but would be disengaged in a short time. While waiting I heard a very earnest prayer being uttered in a loud female voice in the adjoining room. I inquired what it meant, and was told that an old Quaker lady, a friend of the President's, had called that afternoon and taken tea at the White House, and that she was then praying with Mr. Lincoln. After the lapse of a few minutes the prayer ceased, and the President accompanied by a Quakeress not less than eighty years old, entered the room where I was sitting. I made up my mind then, gentlemen, that Mr. Lincoln was not a bad man; and I don't think it will be easy to efface the impression that the scene I witnessed and the voice I heard made on my mind."<sup>13</sup>

Father Charles Chiniquy, at the close of his account of an interview with the President, says:

"Never had I heard such sublime words, never had I seen a human face so solemn and so prophet-like as the face of the President when uttering these things. Every sentence had come to me as a hymn from heaven, reverberated by the echoes

<sup>13</sup> F. B. Carpenter, *Six Months in the White House*, p. 191.

of the mountains of Pisgah and Calvary. I was beside myself. Bathed in tears, I tried to say something, but I could not utter a word. I knew the hour to leave had come. I asked from the President permission to fall on my knees and pray with him that his life might be spared; and he knelt with me. But I prayed more with my tears and sobs than with my words. Then I pressed his hand on my lips and bathed it with tears, and with a heart filled with unspeakable desolation I bade him adieu. It was for the last time, for the hour was fast approaching when he was to fall by the hand of an assassin, for his nation's sake."<sup>14</sup>

The following is descriptive of a scene in the White House during a visit of some leaders of the Friends' Church:

"The good man rested his head upon his hands and under a precious gathering influence I knelt in solemn prayer. He knelt close beside me and I felt that his heart went with every word as utterance was given. I afterwards addressed him and when we rose to go he shook my hand heartily and thanked me for the visit."<sup>15</sup>

Brigadier General James F. Rusling, in his charming book, "Men and Things I Saw in Civil War Days," p. 417, places us all under obligations by the following:

"Bishop Edmund Janes testified that: 'Many times during the war, when I visited Lincoln in his private office in Washington, he said: "Do not go, Bishop, until you have prayed with me. We need your prayers and the divine direction in these critical hours," and so time after time I knelt by Mr. Lincoln in the White House when we two were alone, and carried the cause of the Union and the needs of the President's anxious heart and of our distracted country to the Lord in prayer.' "

Similar to the event mentioned by General Rusling is the following by Rev. Edgar Dewitt Jones, in the *Homiletic Review*, for 1909, p. 156: "To Bishop Simpson, who called once

<sup>14</sup> Fifty Years in the Church of Rome, pp. 706-711.

<sup>15</sup> Friends' Review, Lincoln Scrap-book, p. 51.

when the clouds were thickest Lincoln said: 'Bishop, I feel the need of prayer as never before. Please pray for me,' and the two men then fell on their knees in prayer to God for strength and guidance."

#### A PRAYING PRESIDENT

The strongest evidence of Mr. Lincoln's faith in the efficacy of prayer was his own devout prayerfulness.

Of the twenty-six men who, by election or succession, have occupied the position of President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln is the only one who could fittingly be designated, "The Praying President." Some were earnest Christians, others held official positions in the Church and were active in religious work, but Lincoln alone lays bare to us his soulful and secret intercessions with God in prayer, and yet no one of our chief magistrates possessed a larger measure than did Abraham Lincoln of that delicate sensibility that would naturally cause him to keep closed the door of his closet of secret prayer. No one would have been more inclined than he to avoid unnecessary mention of religious matters in conversation, public address, or state papers. Under the tremendous strain and stress of his presidential duties he was often pressed to his knees; and happily for us there are times when he invites us into the inner sanctuary of his confident and constant dependence upon God, and reveals his habit of frequent and fervent prayer.

So clear and emphatic, so many and unreserved are his declarations respecting his confidence in God, his submission to the divine will, and his assurance that in His own good time our Heavenly Father would give victory and restore peace to the nation, that, mingled with the tumult of the battlefield, we can hear the voice of earnest entreaty coming from the secret sanctuary of the White House and ascending to the throne of God. And sometimes during the silence of the midnight hour, when weary soldiers rested on the fields stained with their own blood and with the blood of their fallen com-

rades, awaiting the renewed assaults the morning's gray dawn was sure to bring, the all-night vigils of "the Praying President" were divided between the sound of the heavy tread of his tireless feet, as he strode from wall to wall of his private room, and those recurring seasons of oppressive silence which we have come to know he spent upon his knees in prayer.

In his own lucid language and with becoming modesty he tells us the grounds on which he claimed divine interposition, the specific favors he sought, and his own solemn vows before God. We have but to read and meditate upon his own words respecting his prayerful life, and his life of prayer, to be able to recognize in every favorable issue of battle, every wise measure of administration, and the final triumph of right, the ever-present and potential influence of our mother-taught, Bible-built, Spirit-led President in his "power with God" in prayer.

That the God-fearing people of the nation were also in prayer does not weaken our claim that the most fitting picture\* of Abraham Lincoln is one which represents him upon his knees in prayer, and that, as the world meditates more deeply upon his own solemn words, and upon the testimony of those who knew him best, he will more and more come to be remembered, recognized and revered as "the Praying President" of the United States.

The prayerfulness which characterized Mr. Lincoln's life in the White House began before his election as President. Dr. Newton Bateman tells us that during an interview in October, 1860, "he freely stated his belief in the duty, privilege and efficacy of prayer, and intimated in no unmistakable terms that he had sought in that way the divine guidance and favor."<sup>16</sup>

Mrs. Lincoln states that on the morning of his first inauguration, "He read his inaugural address to his family, and after having read it, he requested to be left alone. The door stood ajar, and his friends distinctly heard him in prayer, com-

<sup>16</sup> John G. Holland, *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 238.      \*See p. 385.

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mending himself, his country, and his family to the care and protection of God. The weight of responsibility laid upon him was too great for his human heart to bear alone."<sup>17</sup>

It was not alone on great occasions like that of his inauguration that Mr. Lincoln turned to God in prayer. He prayed "at all seasons." Noah Brooks, who, but for the President's assassination would have been one of his confidential secretaries, in a letter to Rev. J. A. Reed, states that Mr. Lincoln informed him "that after he went to the White House he kept up the habit of daily prayer. Sometimes he said it was only ten words but those ten words he had."<sup>18</sup>

Hon. John G. Nicolay, one of the President's private secretaries, who knew him as fully as was the privilege of any man, says: "Mr. Lincoln was a praying man; I know that to be a fact. And I have heard him request people to pray for him, which he would not have done had he not believed that prayer is answered. Many a time have I heard Mr. Lincoln ask ministers and Christian women to pray for him, and he did not do this for effect. He was no hypocrite, and had such reverence for sacred things that he would not trifle with them. I have heard him say that he prayed."<sup>19</sup>

Of the many whose testimony respecting Mr. Lincoln's character and private life is of interest and value, there are none whose words should have greater weight with the reader than those of Major J. B. Merwin, who, for many years previous to the war and during all the period of that great struggle was intimately associated with Mr. Lincoln. They wrought together in the early and later fifties in behalf of anti-liquor legislation and the cause of temperance in general. And during all the period of the war Major Merwin was on such relations of intimacy with the President as might be expected from their relations and fellowship during preceding years.

<sup>17</sup> William M. Thayer, *From Pioneer Home to White House*, pp. 334-335.

<sup>18</sup> *Scribner's Magazine*, 1873, p. 333.

<sup>19</sup> William Eleroy Curtis, *The True Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 385-386.

In October, 1910, Major Merwin, then living at Middlefield, Conn., wrote as follows:

"I knew Mr. Lincoln intimately from 1854 on to the day of his assassination. Dined with him that day. He came to be one of the most profoundly Christian men I ever knew. He had no religious cant about him at all. I heard and saw Mr. Lincoln pray often. He was divinely aided, and asked—begged—for such guidance, conscious of his own need of help beyond any human aid."<sup>20</sup>

Coming as it does from a man of such great ability, exalted character and personal fellowship with Mr. Lincoln, as was the case with Judge Henry C. Whitney, the following touches our heart very deeply:

"We sadly know that too many Christians pray perfunctorily, simply to pray—to observe the Christian habit and fashion; but Lincoln did not pray as a form, or as an end. His prayers were for a utilitarian purpose and object—to obtain help in time of dire need. He says, 'I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go; my own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day.'"

"His prayers were not as those of the hypocrites 'who stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men,' nor did he 'use vain repetitions as the heathen do,' but he entered into his closet and when he had shut the door prayed to his Father in secret."<sup>21</sup>

Of Lincoln's habitual prayerfulness, Judge Whitney thus testifies: "He believed in the direct intervention of God in our national affairs, and he frequently used to ask Him in a direct, manly way to grant this boon, avert that disaster, or advise him what to do in a given contingency."<sup>22</sup>

Dr. Robert Browne publishes the following declaration of

<sup>20</sup> What was Abraham Lincoln's Religion? p. 26.

<sup>21</sup> Life on the Circuit with Lincoln, pp. 270-271.

<sup>22</sup> Lincoln, the Citizen, p. 207.

Mr. Lincoln's: "I have talked with God. It is His cause, and the Union is His. As He willeth, so it will be. We can but follow and pray for its integrity and for mercy to the fallen."<sup>23</sup>

After the second battle of Bull Run, President Lincoln said: "I have done as well as I could. I prayed to God to direct me the right way and now I must leave the consequences to Him."

#### PRAYER AND PRAISE

Upon one occasion while sitting at dinner he could not eat, being so full of trouble. Arousing himself from his reverie he remarked: "The battle of Port Hudson is now going on and many lives will be sacrificed on both sides, but I have done the best I could trusting in God; for it will be unfortunate if they gain this important point. And on the other hand if we can only gain it we shall gain much and I think we shall for we have a great deal to thank God for, for we have Vicksburg and Gettysburg already." Mrs. Rebecca Pomeroy, whom I am quoting, adds: "Said I to this great, good man, 'Mr. Lincoln, prayer will do what nothing else will. Can you not pray?' 'Yes, I will,' and while the tears were dropping from his haggard and worn-out face, he said, 'Pray for me.' And he went to his room, and could the nation have heard his earnest petition, as I did, they would have fallen on their knees in reverential sympathy. At twelve o'clock at night while the soldiers were guarding the house, the sentinel riding by, quickly halted in front of the house with a telegram that was carried to the President. In a few minutes after the door opened and the President, standing under the chandelier, with one of the sweetest expressions I ever saw him wear, said: 'Good news; good news; Port Hudson is ours. The victory is ours and God is good.' Said I to him, 'Nothing like prayer in times of trouble.' 'Oh, yes, yes, praise, for prayer and praise go together.'"<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Abraham Lincoln and the Men of his Time, Vol. II., p. 378.

<sup>24</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, p. 54.

## EARLY MORNING VIGIL

The full history of President Lincoln's midnight meditations and prayers, and of his early morning vigils, read like a romance in this age of easy living and limited religious fervor—as also reads the story of the lonely struggles of Jesus Christ. We can scarcely imagine that necessities could so weigh upon us, and the sense of helplessness and dependence upon God could be so keenly realized as to cause us to spend hours needed for rest in solitary places and in communion with the Father.

The Gospel record of the Saviour's early morning vigil, "In the morning rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed," is a fitting prelude to the following:

"A distinguished lawyer of New York who is a professing Christian and an intimate friend of my informant had occasion some time since to see the President in Washington. He went to the White House, met Mr. Lincoln and asked for an interview of an hour. Mr. Lincoln said that the pressure of public duties forced him to decline such an interview. He urged that it was important. The President still declined. The gentleman was leaving when Mr. Lincoln stopped him and asked if he would be willing to come at five o'clock the next morning. He gladly agreed to do so and arrived at the White House the next morning as he supposed at five o'clock.

"On consulting his watch at the street lamp he found he had made a mistake of an hour and that it was only four o'clock. He determined to walk about the grounds until the time agreed upon. Coming near a window of one of the rooms of the Presidential Mansion he heard sounds of apparent distress. On listening he found it was the voice of the President engaged in an agony of prayer. The burden of his petition was, 'Oh! God, I cannot see my way. Give me light. I am ignorant, give me wisdom. Teach me what to do and help me to do it. Our country is in peril. Oh! God, it is Thy country, save it for Christ's sake.'

"Here the gentleman felt his position to be questionable and passing on he left the President with his God. On entering the White House he mentioned what he had heard to the usher, who informed him that the President spent the hour between four and five every morning in prayer."<sup>25</sup>

#### PRAYER ANSWERED

It is beyond all question that much of Mr. Lincoln's remarkable wisdom, and his superiority to his fellows, which usually are attributed to his transcendent genius, were due to his familiarity with the Bible, his constant fellowship with God, and the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The Sanitary Commission, with all its complicated machinery and its measureless influence for good, is usually regarded as a product of Mr. Lincoln's heart and brain. But that Commission was the achievement of more than human wisdom as is shown by the following from Dr. Iglehart:

"In my study at Buffalo, the officers of the Church, after the business of an evening had been transacted, fell into an informal discussion of the subject of Lincoln's religion. One claimed that Lincoln was a rank atheist. Another said he was inclined to think him an unbeliever, especially since he had read what Lincoln's old law partner had said on the subject. Most of those present held the opinion that he was a man of faith and prayer, a true Christian. I suggested that the difference of opinion on the subject grew out of the fact that early in life Lincoln, like many others, had a period of unbelief, when he said and wrote some things unfriendly to Christianity, but that when he came up to the tremendous responsibilities of leadership that were laid upon him, he leaned hard upon the Divine arm, and sought and found divine guidance, and that in character and life he proved himself to be a true Christian. Dr. (David) Hill, a trustee, who had been silent up to this time said: "Brethren, I think I can settle the

<sup>25</sup> Rev. John Falkner Blake, Rector of Christ Church, Bridgeport, Conn., in a sermon delivered April 19th, 1865.

question and put at rest any doubt of the great President's faith. During the war there was a reception given at the White House to the members of the Sanitary Commission. I was present. During the evening I took the opportunity to compliment President Lincoln on the wonderful success of the Commission. He said, 'Doctor, would you like to know how this institution was started?' 'I certainly would, Mr. President,' said I. He continued, 'One rainy night I could not sleep; the wounds of the soldiers and sailors distressed me; their pains pierced my heart, and I asked God to show me how they could have better relief. After wrestling some time in prayer, He put the plans of the Sanitary Commission in my mind, and they have been carried out pretty much as God gave them to me that night. Doctor, thank our kind heavenly Father and not me for the Sanitary Commission.' 'Do you think,' said Dr. Hill, 'that a man that would do or talk that way could be anything but a true believer. Gentlemen, if those of us who are leaders in the Church, shall have as much real religion as President Lincoln had we will have very little difficulty in getting to heaven.' After Dr. Hill had spoken there was nothing more to be said on the subject and it was unanimously agreed that Lincoln was a true believer in God and in His holy religion."

This charming and instructive story, as it here appears, was recently sent me by the narrator, Rev. F. C. Iglehart, D.D., with a letter granting permission to reproduce it. It is unsurpassed in its disclosure of Mr. Lincoln's belief in a God who hears and answers prayer.

With peculiar satisfaction I call attention of the reader to an incident made public by the distinguished elocutionist and lecturer, James F. Murdoch. We can never know the full extent of the nation's obligations to that distinguished patriot. It was my privilege to be active in the stirring events with which he was connected, and I know much of his patriotic sacrifices and services. When the exigencies of the nation seemed to require of him the sacrifice, he turned aside from

lucrative employment and devoted his time, talent and income to the nation's needs. His matchless talent as a reader, his personal integrity, and his known devotion to the country caused Mr. Murdoch to be held in high esteem during the years of my residence at Washington. No hall was sufficiently large to hold the audience that would gather when it was announced that in the interest of some patriotic movement Mr. Murdoch would give an entertainment. I still can hear in memory the loud and prolonged applause with which his appearance on the platform was always greeted, and with which his rendering of *Barbara Frietchie*, *Sheridan's Ride*, and like readings were responded to by the multitude who heard him.

Mr. Lincoln appreciated Mr. Murdoch's services and when convenient delighted to have him as his guest at the White House.

The editor of *The Advance* tells this never-to-be-forgotten story which he had from his lips: "I spent three weeks in the White House with Mr. Lincoln as his guest. One night, it was just after the Battle of Bull Run, I was restless and could not sleep. I was repeating the part which I was to take in a public performance. The hour was past midnight, indeed it was coming near the dawn, when I heard low tones proceeding from a private room near where the President slept. The door was partly open. I saw the President kneeling beside an open window. The light was turned low in the room. His back was toward me. For a moment I was silent, looking in amazement and wonder. Then he cried out in tones so pleading and sorrowful: 'O, thou God that heard Solomon in the night when he prayed for wisdom, hear me. I cannot lead this people, I cannot guide the affairs of this nation without Thy help. I am poor, and weak and sinful. O God, who didst hear Solomon when he cried for wisdom, hear me and save this nation.' "

Then Mr. Murdoch adds: "I think from that time the clouds which had hung low and threatening over the affairs of our government, began to roll away; the skies were brighter;

the smile of heaven was upon our President. God heard his prayer and sent deliverance."<sup>26</sup>

Those who would know Abraham Lincoln must see him in his secret chamber on his knees before Almighty God, as Murdoch did, and must, as did that distinguished patriot, hear him pray.

The Rev. F. C. Monfort, D.D., editor and publisher of *The Herald and Presbyter*, Cincinnati, Ohio, on May 2nd, 1914, wrote me as follows:

"I studied elocution under James F. Murdoch and talked with him frequently. I have heard him tell the story of Abraham Lincoln's prayer which he overheard. I do not remember details nor even where he was, though the impression is in my mind that he was a visitor at the White House."

But of all the testimonies regarding President Lincoln's religious faith and life the greatest and best is a declaration made by him to General Daniel E. Sickles on July 5th, 1863.

It will be remembered that the Battle of Gettysburg was fought on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of July, 1863, and that General Sickles, while in command of the Third Corps in that battle, received a severe wound requiring the amputation of one of his legs. On the Sunday following the battle General Sickles was in the hospital at Washington and was called upon by General James F. Rusling, a member of his staff, who states that soon after his arrival President Lincoln came "with his son 'Tad' and remained an hour or more." General Rusling states that during this visit General Sickles inquired of the President if he were anxious respecting the results of the battle at Gettysburg. What followed this inquiry is thus stated and confirmed by both General Rusling and General Sickles:

In reply to a question from General Sickles whether or not the President was anxious about the Battle of Gettysburg, Lincoln gravely said: "No, sir, I was not; some of my Cabinet and many others in Washington were, but I had no fears." General Sickles inquired how this was, and seemed curious

<sup>26</sup> The Presbyterian, April 5th, 1893.

about it. Mr. Lincoln hesitated, but finally said: "Well, I will tell you how it was. In the pinch of your campaign up there, when everybody seemed panic-stricken, and nobody could tell what was going to happen, oppressed by the gravity of our affairs, I went to my room one day, and locked the door, and got down on my knees before Almighty God, and prayed to Him mightily for victory at Gettysburg. I told Him that this was His war, and our cause His cause, but we could not stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville. And I then and there made a solemn vow to Almighty God, that if He would stand by our boys at Gettysburg, I would stand by Him. And He did stand by you boys, and I will stand by Him. And after that, I don't know how it was and I can't explain it, soon a sweet comfort crept into my soul that Almighty God had taken the whole business into His own hands and that things would go all right at Gettysburg. And that is why I had no fears about you."

Asked concerning Vicksburg, the news of which victory had not yet reached him, he said: "I have been praying for Vicksburg also, and believe our heavenly Father is going to give us the victory there, too." Of course, he did not know that Vicksburg had already surrendered the day before. General Rusling says that Mr. Lincoln spoke "calmly and pathetically, as if from the depths of his heart," and that "his manner was deeply touching."

The story of the Lincoln-Sickles interview was first told, as I believe, soon after the Battle of Gettysburg, by General Sickles himself in an address at a banquet in Washington, D. C. It was subsequently written out with care by General Rusling and published as it here appears, and on the 11th of February, 1911, General Sickles, who has since passed away, certified that the statement above quoted was correct.

General Rusling is still living and at his home, in Trenton, New Jersey, on the 24th day of June, 1914, gave the following autograph certificate for publication in this volume:



GENERAL DANIEL E. SICKLES

To whom Lincoln stated that he prayed during the Battle of Gettysburg. From an original photograph in the author's collection.

*(See page 385)*



"I hereby certify that the foregoing is an account prepared by me, of a conversation between President Lincoln and General Sickles in my presence at Washington, D. C., July 5th, 1863, relating to Gettysburg. That statement was prepared with great care and is absolutely correct in every particular.

JAMES F. RUSLING,  
Bvt. Brig. Gen'l U. S. A.

Trenton, N. J.  
June 24, 1914."

Abraham Lincoln was himself the strongest evidence of faith in the efficacy of prayer, and of personal prayerfulness. Stronger proof of this than the multiplied testimonies of those who knew him most intimately, stronger even than his own emphatic declarations of his confident waiting upon God in soulful supplication were his Christlike character and life. Such qualities of heart and soul as those which he ever manifested, are the fruitage of devout and earnest prayer.

Only at the Mercy-seat where the sweet incense of intercession rises before the Lord and fills all the Holy Place, can the fragrance of such holy living be secured. Only by "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord" are we "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.) And that transforming vision of which the Apostle here speaks, is the exclusive privilege of those who "behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in his temple." As the Master prayed "the fashion of His countenance was altered," and He was transfigured before His amazed disciples. The face of Moses became luminous with divine glory as he held communion with Jehovah and though "he wist not that his face did shine," all who saw him were deeply moved by the marvelous transformation.

Such qualities of soul and spirit as were possessed and manifested by Abraham Lincoln are formed only in that inner sanctuary where a devout and earnest soul meets with God in prayer. And only by prolonged and patient waiting upon the

Lord in earnest supplication can any one attain, as Mr. Lincoln did, to such high degrees of Christian qualities.

There is a profound significance in Mr. Lincoln's belief in

#### A FUTURE JUDGMENT

It is said of Daniel Webster that late in his life that great statesman and orator was asked what he regarded as the most solemn and impressive of all his thoughts. To this question, after a moment's silence, he slowly and forcefully replied: "The thought of my personal responsibility to God." Abraham Lincoln lived and toiled, sacrificed and suffered in the constant realization of that most solemn and impressive thought. His honesty appeared to spring from religious convictions, and it was his habit when conversing of things which most intimately concerned himself to say that however he might be misapprehended by men who did not appear to know him, he was glad to know that no thought or intent of his escaped the observation of that Judge by whose final decree he expected to stand or fall in this world and the next. It seemed as though this was his surest refuge at times when he was most misunderstood or misrepresented.

In his first inaugural address, delivered March 4th, 1861, to those who were at that time contemplating rebellion on account of his election, he said: "You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect and defend it.'"<sup>27</sup>

In his address at a fair in the interest of the Sanitary Commission, in Baltimore on April 18th, 1864, referring to his enlistment of colored people in the army, Mr. Lincoln said: "Upon a clear conviction of duty I am resolved to turn that element of strength to account; and I am responsible for it to the American people, to the Christian world, to history, and in my final account to God."<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., pp. 184-185.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., Vol. X., p. 79.



GENERAL JAMES F. RUSLING

Whose account of President Lincoln's interview with General Sickles is here published.

*(See page 387)*



A few days later, May 30th, 1864, in a letter to Senator Doolittle and others, from which I have quoted elsewhere, Mr. Lincoln stated: "When brought to my final reckoning may I have to answer for robbing no man of his goods, yet more tolerable even this, than for robbing one of himself and all that was his."<sup>29</sup>

Speaking of a pardon which he had just issued to a soldier under sentence of death, he said: "I could not think of going into eternity with the blood of the poor young man on my skirts."<sup>30</sup>

In their great contribution to the literature of the world, entitled, "Abraham Lincoln, A History," the private secretaries of the great President speak of his sense of responsibility to God and belief in a future judgment in the following chaste and forceful language: "From that morning when, standing amid the falling snowflakes on the railway car at Springfield, he asked the prayers of his neighbors in those touching phrases whose echo rose that night in invocations from thousands of family altars, to the memorable hour when on the steps of the National Capitol he humbled himself before his Creator in the sublime words of the second inaugural, there is not an expression known to have come from his lips or pen but proves that he held himself answerable in every act of his career to a more august tribunal than any on earth. The fact that he was not a communicant of any church, and that he was singularly reserved in regard to his personal religious life, gives only the greater force to these striking proofs of his profound reverence and faith."

Mr. Lincoln's religious faith unquestionably included belief in

#### FUTURE PUNISHMENT

With him character and destiny were inseparably connected. The reward of virtue and the punishment of sin were sure. This life was the seed time of which the life to come was

<sup>29</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., pp. 109-110.

<sup>30</sup> D. D. Thompson, Abraham Lincoln, p. 83.

the harvest. He speaks of the "finally impenitent" clearly indicating his belief in the duration of moral conditions beyond the confines of this present world. Early in his public life, when a member of the Illinois legislature, during a tremendous struggle to secure the removal of the capital of the state from Salem to Springfield, Mr. Lincoln was greatly disturbed by efforts to comply with that movement, which he approved, other measures to which he was unchangeably opposed. While that struggle was in progress a caucus was held for the purpose of dissuading Mr. Lincoln from his determination to oppose the capital removal measure unless it was disassociated from the schemes to which he objected. Mr. Lincoln remained unyielding and past the hour of midnight he arose in the caucus and made what has been characterized as a speech of great eloquence and power in opposition to the movement as it then stood, at the close of which he said: "You may burn my body to ashes, and scatter them to the winds of heaven; you may drag my soul down to the regions of darkness and despair to be tormented forever; but you will never get me to support a measure which I believe to be wrong, although by doing so I may accomplish that which I believe to be right."<sup>31</sup>

In a letter to George Robertson dated August 15th, 1855, Mr. Lincoln expresses great depression of spirits, in view of what he regarded as the tendency in the direction of the perpetuation and nationalization of the institution of slavery. In this letter he says: "So far as peaceable voluntary Emancipation is concerned, the condition of the Negro slave in America, scarcely less terrible to the contemplation of a free man, is now as fixed and hopeless of change for the better, as that of the lost souls of the finally impenitent."<sup>32</sup>

In granting a respite for Nathaniel Gordon, to whom he could not see his way clear to give a pardon, on February 4th, 1862, Mr. Lincoln said: "In granting this respite it becomes my painful duty to admonish the prisoner that, relinquishing

<sup>31</sup> Ida M. Tarbell, *Life of Lincoln*, Vol. I., p. 139.

<sup>32</sup> *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. II., p. 280.

#### A PRAYING PRESIDENT.

GEN. JAMES F. RUSLING, of Trenton, N.J., relates a significant conversation which he heard on Sunday, July 5, 1863, in the room in Washington where Gen. Sickles lay wounded, just after the great victory at Gettysburg. In reply to a question from Gen. Sickles whether or not the President was anxious about the battle at Gettysburg, Lincoln gravely said, "No, I was not; some of my cabinet and many others in Washington were, but I had no fears." Gen. Sickles inquired how this was, and seemed curious about it. Mr. Lincoln hesitated, but finally replied: "Well, I will tell you how it was. In the pinch of your campaign up there, when everybody seemed panic-stricken, and nobody could tell what was going to happen, oppressed by the gravity of our affairs, I went to my room one day, and locked the door, and got down on my knees before Almighty God, and prayed to Him mightily for victory at Gettysburg. I told Him that this was His war, and our cause His cause, but we couldn't stand another Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville. And I then and there made a solemn vow to Almighty God, that if He would stand by our boys at Gettysburg, I would stand by Him. And He did stand by you boys, and I will stand by Him. And after that (I don't know how it was, and I can't explain it), soon a sweet comfort crept into my soul that God Almighty had taken the whole business into His own hands and that things would go all right at Gettysburg. And that is why I had no fears about you." Asked concerning Vicksburg, the news of which victory had not yet reached him, he said, "I have been praying for Vicksburg also, and believe our Heavenly Father is going to give us victory there, too." Of course, he did not know that Vicksburg had already surrendered the day before. Gen. Rusling says that Mr. Lincoln spoke "solemnly and pathetically, as if from the depth of his heart," and that his manner was deeply touching.

#### GENERAL RUSLING'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing is an account prepared by me of a conversation between President Lincoln and Gen. Sickles in my presence at Washington, D.C., July 5, 1863, relating to Gettysburg. That statement was prepared with great care and is absolutely correct in every particular.

Trenton, N.J.  
June 24, 1914.

*James F. Rusling*  
*Butler, B. J., Gen. H. W. H.,*



all expectation of pardon by human authority, he refer himself alone to the mercy of the common God and Father of all men."<sup>33</sup>

Rev. Theodore Cuyler, D.D., says: "On the day after he (Lincoln) heard of the awful slaughter at Fredericksburg, he remarked at the War Office, 'If any of the lost in hell suffered worse than I did last night I pity them.'"<sup>34</sup>

Probably the most emphatic declaration of Mr. Lincoln concerning the future punishment is to be found in his reference to the efforts which were being made to induce him to retract and nullify the Emancipation Proclamation. Respecting those efforts he says: "There have been men base enough to propose to me to return to slavery the black warriors of Port Hudson and Olustee, and thus win the respect of the masters they fought. Should I do so, I should deserve to be damned in time and eternity. Come what will, I will keep my faith with friend and foe."<sup>35</sup>

#### CONSOLATION IN DEATH

As early as February 3rd, 1842, in a letter of touching tenderness, addressed to his lifelong friend, Joshua F. Speed, in speaking of the serious and possibly fatal illness of his friend's wife, Mr. Lincoln said: "The death scenes of those we love are surely painful enough; but these we are prepared for and expect to see; they happen to all, and all know they must happen. Painful as they are, they are not an unlooked for sorrow. Should she, as you fear, be destined to an early grave, it is indeed a great consolation to know that she is so well prepared to meet it. Her religion which you once disliked so much, I will venture you now prize most highly."<sup>36</sup>

In addition to the assurance afforded by the foregoing letter of Mr. Lincoln's belief in the consolations of grace at

<sup>33</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., p. 96.

<sup>34</sup> Recollections of a Long Life, p. 145.

<sup>35</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 191.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Vol. I., p. 186.

death, we are also assured of his firm and unquestioning faith in

### A FUTURE LIFE

Mrs. Pomeroy, from whom I have already quoted, says concerning this: "The first four weeks that I was looking after little Tad I was feeling exceedingly anxious about my boys (sick soldiers) and the President proposed taking me every few days to the hospital that I might report to him how they felt when near death, and what they thought of the future."<sup>37</sup>

Rev. F. C. Iglehart, D.D., tells us that sitting by the bedside of a dying woman for whom he had just written a will, Mr. Lincoln listened to her joyful declaration that she was fully prepared for death and for the future life, and very feelingly said: "Your faith in Christ is wise and strong. Your hope of a future life is blessed. You are to be congratulated on passing through this life so usefully and into the future so happily."<sup>38</sup>

In 1856, at the residence of the Hon. Norman B. Judd, in Chicago, Mr. Lincoln with rare beauty and fitness expressed his belief in immortality and the future life, as follows:

"It was in the autumn of that year, and during the trial in the Federal Court of the great Rock Island Bridge case, involving the right of the railway company to bridge the Mississippi. Lincoln was spending the evening at the home of Mrs. Judd, situated on Michigan Avenue, and looking directly out upon Lake Michigan. As the party sat on the piazza, the full moon rose out of the lake, casting its light on many a sail of the numerous ships going in and out of the harbor. The waves were beating a low anthem against the breakwater and the shore. The scene, beautiful beyond description, was peculiarly novel and impressive to Mr. Lincoln, whose home was on the prairies far inland. He recited, with great expression, Buchanan Read's poem, descriptive of the Bay of Naples, and then went on to speak of the wonders of astronomy and of the

<sup>37</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, p. 54.

<sup>38</sup> The Speaking Oak.

sublime power of the great Creator, who had brought the numberless worlds all around us into existence, and who had created man with an intellect able to discover the wonders of the universe. 'Surely God would not have created such a being as man, with an ability to grasp the infinite, to exist only for a day! No,' said he, 'man was made for immortality.'<sup>39</sup>

It is comforting to know that in the midst of his weariness, heartache and anguish of soul Mr. Lincoln fully believed in and looked confidently forward to

#### ETERNAL FELICITY IN HEAVEN

On the 12th of January, 1851, in a letter to his stepbrother, John D. Johnston, he said: "I sincerely hope father may recover his health, but at all events, tell him to remember to call upon and confide in our great and good and merciful Maker, who will not turn from him in any extremity. He notes the fall of the sparrow, and numbers the hairs of our heads, and He will not forget the dying man who puts his trust in Him. Say to him that if we could meet now it is doubtful whether it would not be more painful than pleasant, but that if it be his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous meeting with many loved ones gone before, and where the rest of us, through the help of God, hope ere long to join them."<sup>40</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's belief in the reuniting of earthly ties and recognition in heaven was very beautifully declared by an expressive gesture a few weeks previous to his departure from Springfield to assume the duties of President. With that filial devotion for which he was so distinguished, he took a cross-country ride by private conveyance to a distant place for a last interview with his beloved stepmother, who was then far advanced in years and very feeble.

At the close of their brief visit Mr. Lincoln arose and affectionately embraced the white-haired matron, pressing her

<sup>39</sup> I. N. Arnold, *The Layman's Faith*, p. 29.

<sup>40</sup> *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. II., p. 148.

close to his breast and tenderly caressing her withered cheek. "Abram," she said with trembling voice, "I shall never see you again."

Pressing her still more closely to his breast and raising his right hand with his finger pointing upward he said: "Mother," and not another word was uttered. That silent gesture was more eloquent than words and was prophetic of their reunion in a better world.

Elizabeth Keckley says: "When Willie died, as he lay on the bed, Mr. Lincoln came to the bed, lifted the cover from the face of his child, gazed at it long and earnestly murmuring: 'My poor boy, he was too good for this earth. God has called him home. I know that he is much better off in heaven, but then we loved him so. It is hard, hard to have him die.'"<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Behind the Scenes, p. 103.

## V

### LINCOLN'S RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

THE foregoing array of evidence proves beyond all question that Abraham Lincoln firmly believed in the Bible as the divinely inspired Word of God, and in the commonly accepted doctrines of the Christian Church. His own statements in official papers, public utterances, private correspondence, and personal interviews, respecting these matters are so clear and unequivocal, so pronounced and earnest, as to answer fully and forever all inquiries respecting his religious belief.

Equally abundant and convincing is the evidence of his personal religious experiences and life. That he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour and became the recipient of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is as certain as any historical fact. Evidence of this is cumulative and complete and includes all kinds of authentic, valid testimony.

#### ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S CONVERSION

Written statements in Mr. Lincoln's own handwriting constitute evidence touching this matter which no one can reasonably deny or doubt. Next in value and strength to such testimony are the authentic statements of trustworthy persons who were closely associated with Mr. Lincoln and were highly esteemed and trusted by him. Of such persons there was not one more trustworthy or more fully trusted than Rev. James F. Jaquess, D.D., pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, in Springfield, Illinois, and later Colonel of the 73rd Regiment Volunteer Infantry, during all the history of that famous regiment.

President Lincoln's high estimate of the character and worth of Colonel Jaquess was forcefully expressed at the time of his assignment by the President to one of the most important and peculiarly difficult and successful missions of the war, the Jaquess-Gilmore Embassy of Peace, of which an extended account appears elsewhere in this work and should be read in connection with the subjoined statement by Colonel Jaquess respecting an interview between Mr. Lincoln and himself in Springfield, Illinois.

#### COLONEL JAQUESS' STATEMENT

was made at a reunion of the 73rd Regiment of the Illinois Infantry, held September 28-29, 1897, in Springfield, and is as follows:

"The mention of Mr. Lincoln's name recalls to my mind an occurrence that perhaps I ought to mention. Very soon after my second year's work as a minister in the Illinois Conference I was sent to Springfield.

"One beautiful Sunday morning in May, I was standing in the front door of the parsonage when a little boy came up to me and said: 'Mr. Lincoln sent me around to see if you was going to preach today.' Now, I had met Mr. Lincoln, but I never thought any more of 'Abe' Lincoln than I did of any one else. I said to the boy: 'You go back and tell Mr. Lincoln that if he will come to church he will see whether I am going to preach or not.' The little fellow stood working his fingers and finally said: 'Mr. Lincoln told me he would give me a quarter if I would find out whether you are going to preach.' I did not want to rob the little fellow of his income, so I told him to tell Mr. Lincoln that I was going to try to preach.

"The church was filled that morning. It was a good-sized church, but on that day all the seats were filled. I had chosen for my text the words, 'Ye must be born again,' and during the course of my sermon I laid particular stress on the word 'must.' Mr. Lincoln came into the church after the services

had commenced, and there being no vacant seats, chairs were put in the altar in front of the pulpit, and Mr. Lincoln and Governor French and wife sat in the altar during the entire services, Mr. Lincoln on my left and Governor French on my right, and I noticed that Mr. Lincoln appeared to be deeply interested in the sermon. A few days after that Sunday Mr. Lincoln called on me and informed me that he had been greatly impressed with my remarks on Sunday and that he had come to talk with me further on the matter. I invited him in, and my wife and I talked and prayed with him for hours. Now, I have seen many persons converted; I have seen hundreds brought to Christ, and if ever a person was converted, Abraham Lincoln was converted that night in my house."<sup>1</sup>

There is every reason for giving this remarkable story unquestioning credence. That it was voluntarily related by Colonel Jaquess at the time and upon the occasion designated is beyond question. It is recorded here just as given by him in the printed proceedings of a reunion of Colonel Jaquess' regiment. It is also certain that the Colonel was absolutely incapable of fabricating such a story. Furthermore, the incident explains the apparently mysterious eagerness with which President Lincoln welcomed, considered and favored the seemingly preposterous mission proposed by Colonel Jaquess in 1863. Such an incident as is mentioned in this Jaquess statement could not have failed to cause Mr. Lincoln to hold the minister with whom he had such an interview in high esteem and to cherish for him the confidence and love which he manifested toward him. It is well known that Mr. Lincoln approved of, and enjoyed a sermon aflame with fervid enthusiasm. He was greatly interested in and deeply moved by the preaching of Rev. Peter Aked whose burning eloquence was not unlike that of Dr. Jaquess. Hence, the diligence with

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Reunion Survivors 73rd Regiment, Illinois Infantry Volunteers, p. 30. *The Christian Advocate*, November 11th, 1909.

which Mr. Lincoln sought to be assured that Dr. Jaquess would preach on that Sabbath morning in May, 1849, and his profound interest in the sermon to which he listened.

The prolonged silence of those who knew of this event in Mr. Lincoln's life is quite understandable and does not justify any doubt of the story itself. It was like Mr. Lincoln to make no mention of this event to any person; and it was just like Dr. Jaquess to regard the affair as confidential, and to leave the question of publicity at the time wholly with Mr. Lincoln. Some preachers would have proclaimed the event from the housetop, but Mr. Lincoln never would have sought such an interview with a minister of that caliber and character.

It was with reference to this same subject of the new birth that Nicodemus had his memorable private interview "at night" with the Master, and we have no information that either Jesus or Nicodemus ever gave the affair any publicity, until after the lapse of half a century the story was told in the Gospel by John.

Mr. Lincoln's subsequent period of doubt concerning religious matters was strictly normal, and does not to any degree discredit the account of the declaration of his acceptance of Christ during the interview in the Jaquess' home. As elsewhere stated, people of Mr. Lincoln's temperament and mental make-up usually come into a large and satisfying faith by passing through a period of doubt. Therefore, instead of discrediting the Jaquess' story, Mr. Lincoln's later season of doubt confirms the account of that event in his life and bears witness to his surrender to Christ, as stated by Colonel Jaquess, and to the sincerity of subsequent efforts to keep the covenant he made at the time of that surrender. That surrender of his will and heart naturally called for the approval of his reason and led to investigation of Christian evidences which followed, and which was so honest and thorough as to seem to be unsettling; but which, in fact, was the process by which a strongly intellectual nature reached settled and satisfactory convictions.

The claim that Mr. Lincoln was so deeply moved by Dr. Jaquess' sermon on the "New Birth" as to seek from him further light on the subject, and that at the interview in the parsonage he declared his acceptance of Christ as his personal Saviour is not at variance with any of Mr. Lincoln's subsequent declarations. In considering those declarations it should be remembered that Mr. Lincoln was of a secretive nature and respecting religious matters he was peculiarly

#### RESERVED AND RETICENT.

Mr. Lincoln seemed to regard his personal religious experience as a matter of sacred confidence between himself and the Saviour. He was familiar with the testimony given by professing Christians at "Experience meetings," and always listened to them with interest, but with rare exceptions he refrained from speaking of his own religious experience. While delighting to bear witness to his faith in God and in the Scriptures, and to his trust in Divine Providence, he was exceptionally reserved and reluctant in regard to the work of grace in his own heart. To only a favored few, and upon rare occasions, did he speak of his personal relation to Christ.

So acute and accurate was he in perception, and so sensitive to spiritual atmosphere that it required a delicate and peculiarly responsive nature to cause him to unbosom himself by speaking of the things of the inner life. Referring to this trait in his character Colonel A. K. McClure remarks: "I saw Mr. Lincoln many times during his Presidential term, and, like all of the many others who had intimate relations with him, I enjoyed his confidence only within the limitations of the necessities of the occasion."<sup>2</sup>

To the same effect Colonel McClure says still further: "Mr. Lincoln gave his confidence to no living man without reservation. He trusted many, but he trusted only within the carefully-studied limitations of their usefulness, and when

<sup>2</sup> Lincoln and Men of War Times, p. 4.

he trusted he confided, as a rule, only to the extent necessary to make that trust available."<sup>3</sup>

This from F. B. Carpenter, the artist: "Doubtless he felt as deeply upon the great questions of the soul and eternity as any other thoughtful man; but the very tenderness and humility of his nature would not permit the exposure of his inmost convictions, except upon the rarest occasions, and to his most intimate friends."<sup>4</sup>

And this from Dr. J. G. Holland: "It was rare that he exhibited what was religious in him; and he never did this at all, except when he found just the nature and character that were sympathetic with that aspect and element of his character. A great deal of his best, deepest, largest life he kept almost constantly from view, because he would not expose it to the eyes and apprehension of the careless multitude."<sup>5</sup>

In connection with the account of the "Bateman Interview" Dr. Holland has this to say: "It was one of the peculiarities of Mr. Lincoln to hide these religious experiences from the eyes of the world. In the same State House where this conversation occurred, there were men who imagined—who really believed, who freely said—that Mr. Lincoln had probably revealed himself with less restraint to them than to others, men who thought they knew him as they knew their bosom companions, who had never in their whole lives heard from his lips one word of all these religious convictions and experiences. They did not regard him as a religious man. They had never seen anything but the active lawyer, the keen politician, the jovial, fun-loving companion, in Mr. Lincoln. All this department of his life he had kept carefully hidden from them. Why he should say that he was obliged to appear differently to others does not appear; but the fact is a matter of history that he never exposed his own religious life to those who had no sympathy with it. It is doubtful

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln and Men of War Times, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> Six Months in the White House, pp. 185-186.

<sup>5</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 241.

whether the clergymen of Springfield knew anything of these experiences. Very few of them were in political sympathy with him; and it is evident that he could open his heart to no one except under the most favorable circumstances. The fountain from which gushed up so grand and good a life was kept carefully covered from the eyes of the world. Its possessor looked into it often, but the careless or curious crowd were never favored with the vision. There was much in his conduct that was simply a cover to these thoughts—an attempt to conceal them.”<sup>6</sup>

There were, however, some, though only a very limited number, to whom Mr. Lincoln spoke quite freely respecting his religious experiences. Late in October, 1860, in one of his doubting moods, a few days prior to his first election to the Presidency, Mr. Lincoln in conversation with Dr. Newton Bateman said: “I am not a Christian. God knows I would be one, but I have carefully read the Bible, and I do not so understand this Book. I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If he has a place and work for me—and I think He has—I believe I am ready.” In the same conversation he said: “I think more on these subjects than upon all others, and I have done so for years.”<sup>7</sup>

This absence of sunny certainty must not be taken as a repudiation of his Christian standing, but as something that belongs to an introspective and self-exacting nature.

During his administration as President, in a conversation with his close personal friend Noah Brooks, Mr. Lincoln said: “I am very sure that if I do not go away from here a wiser man, I shall go away a better man, for having learned here what a very poor sort of a man I am.”<sup>8</sup>

“Referring to what he called a change of heart, he said he did not remember any precise time when he passed through

<sup>6</sup> *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 239-240.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 237-238.

<sup>8</sup> *Harper's Magazine*, 1865, p. 226.

any special change of purpose, or of heart; but he would say, that his own election to office, and the crisis immediately following, influentially determined him in what he called a 'process of crystallization,' then going on in his mind."<sup>9</sup>

Respecting these statements, Mr. Brooks says: "Reticent as he was, and shy of discoursing much of his own mental exercises, these few utterances now have a value with those who knew him, which his dying words would scarcely have possessed."<sup>9</sup>

At one time in conversation with a very prominent Christian woman, Mr. Lincoln said: "Mrs. ———, I have formed a very high opinion of your Christian character, and now, as we are alone, I have a mind to ask you to give me, in brief, your idea of what constitutes a true religious experience."

After listening attentively to the answer to his question, Mr. Lincoln very earnestly said: "If what you have told me is really a correct view of this great subject, I think I can say with sincerity that I hope I am a Christian. I had lived until my boy Willie died without realizing fully these things. That blow overwhelmed me. It showed me my weakness as I had never felt it before, and if I can take what you have stated as a test, I think I can safely say that I know something of that change of which you speak; and I will further add, that it has been my intention for some time, at a suitable opportunity, to make a public religious profession."<sup>10</sup>

In publishing Mr. Carpenter's account of this incident, Judge Whitney says: "This statement was made to an eminent Christian lady, and may be relied on as authentic, and it shows conclusively that Abraham Lincoln was a Christian."<sup>11</sup>

General Horatio King tells this corroborative incident: "Shortly before his death an Illinois clergyman asked Lincoln: 'Do you love Jesus?' Mr. Lincoln solemnly replied: 'When I left Springfield I asked the people to pray for me. I

<sup>9</sup> *Harper's Magazine*, p. 226.

<sup>10</sup> *Six Months in the White House*, p. 187.

<sup>11</sup> *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*, p. 281.

was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg and saw the graves of thousands of our soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ. Yes I do love Jesus.' ”<sup>12</sup>

Mr. O. H. Olroyd reports Mr. Lincoln to have said: “I have often wished that I was a more devout man than I am.”<sup>13</sup>

Dr. P. D. Gurley, Mr. Lincoln's pastor, said, after the President's death, in a conversation with Dr. J. A. Reed: “I had frequent and intimate conversations with him (Lincoln) on the subject of the Bible and the Christian religion when he could have no motive to deceive me, and I considered him sound not only in the truth of the Christian Religion but in all its fundamental doctrines and teachings. And more than that: In the latter days of his chastened and weary life, after the death of his son Willie and his visit to the battlefield of Gettysburg, he said with tears in his eyes that he had lost confidence in everything but God, and that he now believed his heart was changed and that he loved the Saviour and if he was not deceived in himself it was his intention soon to make a profession of religion.”<sup>14</sup>

The foregoing statements by Mr. Lincoln himself and by others, tell the story of the progressive experience of a thoroughly sincere and conscientious Christian man. This experience was in harmony with the words of the Prophet, “Let us know, let us follow on to know the Lord.”<sup>15</sup> They came in the natural order and sequence described by Jesus in the figure, “First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.”<sup>16</sup> They followed the law of increase indicated in the words, “The path of the righteous is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's life during the period covered by these statements was a progressive experience marked all the way by battles and victories, by struggles and achievements, as is the

<sup>12</sup> *Christian Work and Evangelist*.

<sup>13</sup> Lincoln Album, p. 254. <sup>14</sup> *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1873, p. 339.

<sup>15</sup> Hos. 6: 3.

<sup>16</sup> Mark 4: 28.

<sup>17</sup> Prov. 4: 18.

case with all true Christians. It was a perfectly normal Christian experience, orderly in sequence and growth. It was like the ever-enlarging experience of Paul from his first vision of Jesus near Damascus, when he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" to the time when from his prison at Rome, he sent the farewell testimony: "I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day."<sup>18</sup>

The life of Lincoln, like that of Paul, was one of toil and hardship, of sacrifice and suffering; but through it all there was an ever-increasing disclosure of divine love and compassion, and an ever-deepening experience of divine grace. Perhaps in no respect was there a closer similarity in these two lives than in the constant increase of their realization of the Lord's presence and power, their own consecration to His service, and their steady and manifest transformation into His character and likeness. Not less laborious than the life of Paul was the life of Abraham Lincoln, and not more Christlike was Paul's forgiveness of his enemies than was Abraham Lincoln's spirit toward those who, without just cause, heaped cruel maledictions upon his devoted head.

And how like the experiences of Mary and Martha were the results of Lincoln's heartbreaking grief at the death of his beautiful boy. The sisters of Lazarus knew Jesus intimately before the death of their brother, but they did not know and they never could have known His unspeakable preciousness without the overwhelming sorrow which came upon them and brought Him to their relief.

Mr. Lincoln may have thought he experienced a change of heart when he realized the consolations of divine grace at that time of his sore bereavement; and he may have been even more fully convinced of his acceptance with God, when on the battlefield of Gettysburg he renewed his consecration

<sup>18</sup> 2 Tim. 4:6-8.

to God; but those who have had large experience in Christian life fully understand that such events usually are attended by a deepening of the soul's conscious need, and a quickening of faith that apprehends the Lord's presence and the gracious ministrations of His grace.

The Christian's life is like climbing a mountain, which always requires vigorous and persevering effort, and in which as we ascend, the area of our vision is constantly enlarged; new and beautiful scenes come into view; the atmosphere becomes clearer and the ability to see is quickened and made more acute by our exertions.

Very much like this did Mr. Lincoln's religious life rise from the comparatively low level of the Bateman Interview in 1860 to the good confession which he witnessed to Dr. Gurley four years later. That was a still greater height when he prepared his second inaugural address and soon afterward declared that the defeated enemy would be treated by the Government with forbearance and kindness. But it should not be forgotten that the Bateman Interview was one of the way-marks of the journey leading up to the heights of Christian attainment which Mr. Lincoln reached.

But while the Christian world accepts with the utmost satisfaction Mr. Lincoln's declarations during the later years of his Presidency that he was a Christian and that he had consciously experienced the regenerating work of the Spirit which he always designated as "a change of heart," it needed no testimony from Mr. Lincoln's lips to warrant or to strengthen the assurance that he was a devout child of God through faith in Jesus Christ. His character and life declare him to have been a Christian with greater certainty than could any oral or written declaration of a religious experience.

But the world will always be reluctant to believe that Abraham Lincoln's Christian life began as late as the time when he claimed to have experienced a change of heart. His statement that he was not a Christian at an earlier date, was

based upon his lack of a satisfying religious experience. He evidently thought that he should be able to state "the precise time" when he became a Christian, which only a limited number of believers can do. Nor is such knowledge necessary. Christian life like natural life has its infancy and youth, and the reality of later conscious existence does not depend upon our recollection of the beginning of that life. It is enough for any one to know that he is now an accepted child of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.

#### THE RESTRAINTS OF MODESTY

undoubtedly caused Mr. Lincoln to refrain from claiming to be a Christian after he had fully complied with all the conditions of salvation.

He was temperamentally inclined to self-depreciation and seemed incapable of claiming for himself any personal excellence or merit. When in 1832 he was first a candidate for the legislature, in an exceedingly modest circular to the voters, he expressed the fear that he was "more presuming" than was becoming, and added: "I was born and have ever remained in the most humble walks of life."<sup>19</sup>

When in 1854 he first decided "to try to be United States senator," he wrote Judge Joseph Gillispie requesting his support and said: "I know, and acknowledge, that you have as just claims to the place as I have, and therefore I cannot ask you to yield to me if you are thinking of becoming a candidate yourself."<sup>20</sup>

When in 1856 the dispatches stated that in the national republican convention he had received a large vote as the nominee for vice-president, with characteristic modesty he waived it aside by saying: "It must have been another Lincoln who resides in Massachusetts."

In 1858 in furnishing data for the publisher of the dic-

<sup>19</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. I., p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Vol. II., p. 265.

tionary of Congress he says of himself: "Education defective."

In 1859, after his great debates with Douglas, in a letter promising a service requested by Hon. N. B. Judd, he said: "I shall attend to it as well as I know how, which, God knows, will not be very good."<sup>21</sup>

A few days later in a letter to J. W. Fell, he explained the lack of material in data furnished by him for a biography, by saying: "There is not much of it for the reason, I suppose, that there is not much of me. If anything be made out of it, I wish it to be modest, and not to go beyond the material."

In the data which he furnished with this explanation and request, he speaks of his parents as having been born of "undistinguished families—second families perhaps I should say."<sup>22</sup>

Only a few months previous to his nomination at Chicago, in reply to urgent requests to become a candidate for the Presidency, Mr. Lincoln said: "Do you believe that a plain, common man, as I am, of the back-river, if not 'back-woods' country, is or can be what you so ardently wish I should be, a real leader of the people? You surely do not believe that I am a great man, but rather that I am an earnest and sincere one."<sup>23</sup>

To his Illinois friends who in 1859, after his great debate with Douglas, insisted upon making him a candidate for President he frankly said: "I do not feel that I have reached the place in public estimation, nor do I feel that I possess the fitness and qualifications to be nominated for and possibly be elected President."<sup>24</sup>

And after his election as President, in an address to the legislature of Ohio, February 13th, 1861, he speaks of him-

<sup>21</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. V., p. 283.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 287.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Browne, Life of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., p. 192.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 394.

self as being, "Without a name, perhaps without a reason why" he "should have a name."<sup>25</sup>

During his Presidency, Mr. Lincoln stated to a close friend that the story of his life was "like the sentence in Gray's Elegy—'The short and simple annals of the poor.'"

The beautiful modesty and self-depreciation revealed by these disclosures undoubtedly had much to do in causing Mr. Lincoln for so long a period to state that he was not a Christian, while his life, as judged by friends and enemies alike was a living illustration of "pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father."<sup>26</sup> He felt that to claim to be a Christian would be to profess a condition of purity of heart and spirit to which he seemed unwarranted in laying claim without the most assuring evidence. And unfortunately he sought that evidence by inspecting his own heart, a method which usually is not reassuring. Indeed, there are few people of Mr. Lincoln's absolute honesty and truthfulness who would claim to be Christians after rigidly examining their own hearts in the light of the requirements of Scripture as he undoubtedly was accustomed to do, especially after his memorable interview with Dr. Jaquess. Well would it be if all up-struggling souls were led to turn their eyes from the inspection of their own hearts to a trustful vision of Christ; and to see that a claim to belong to the redeemed family of God is not based upon feeling but upon faith; and that the faith through which salvation is attained, is based, not upon experience, but upon the immutable Word of God.

But at the very time that Mr. Lincoln disclaimed being a Christian, he confidently, and without hesitation, claimed that

#### HE WAS CHOSEN OF GOD

to be the ruler of the nation and to accomplish the great work to which he had been called. Judge Whitney says "he felt he was commissioned by God to achieve mighty results;

<sup>25</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., p. 121.

<sup>26</sup> James 1: 27.

. . . he believed that God ruled the Universe through the media of agents and that he was the agent to save the nation and to abolish slavery."<sup>27</sup>

A few days before his first election to the Presidency, in an interview with Dr. Bateman, already referred to, he stated that he believed God had a work for him and he was ready for it.

On September 28th, 1862, in reply to an address from the Society of 'Friends, Mr. Lincoln speaks of himself as "being a humble instrument in the hands of our heavenly Father."<sup>28</sup>

In the course of an interview with Rev. Dr. Miner, he said: "It has pleased Almighty God to place me in my present position, and looking up to Him for guidance I must work out my destiny as best I can."<sup>29</sup>

Dr. Holland, in speaking of Mr. Lincoln's faith in an overruling Providence, says: "He believed in his inmost soul that he was an instrument in the hands of God for the accomplishment of a great purpose. The power was above him, the workers were around him, the end was beyond him. In him, Providence, the people and the purpose of both met; and as a poor, weak, imperfect man, he felt humbled by the august presence and crushed by the importance with which he had been endowed."<sup>30</sup>

To Mr. James R. Gilmore, the journalist, President Lincoln said: "God selects his own instruments, . . . for instance, He chose me to steer the ship through a great crisis."<sup>31</sup>

#### FULLY OBEDIENT TO GOD'S WILL

Believing that he was a called and commissioned agent of the Most High, and that he was under definite and imperative divine orders Mr. Lincoln was diligent and constant in his efforts to ascertain and obey the will of God.

<sup>27</sup> Life on the Circuit with Lincoln, p. 276.

<sup>28</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 50.

<sup>29</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, pp. 51-52. <sup>30</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, p. 235.

<sup>31</sup> Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln, p. 158.

In reply to a clergyman who ventured to say, in his presence, that he "hoped the Lord was on our side," Mr. Lincoln said: "I am not at all concerned about that, for I know that the Lord is *always* on the side of *right*. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that *I* and *this nation* should be on the Lord's side."<sup>32</sup>

The following is peculiarly significant in that its closing words rarely appear in any of Mr. Lincoln's pronouncements: "I shall in the conscientious discharge of my duty to my country and my God, to whom we all owe allegiance, endeavor to make the best of it, *so help me God*."<sup>33</sup>

In a letter to Caleb Russell and Sallie Fenton, dated January 5th, 1863, Mr. Lincoln said: "I am conscious of no desire for my country's welfare that is not in consonance with His will, and of no plan upon which we may not ask His blessing."<sup>34</sup>

In his statements at the White House, a record of which is given by the Hon. James F. Wilson, Mr. Lincoln said: "I think He means that we shall do more than we have yet done in furtherance of His plans, and He will open the way for our doing it. I have felt His hand upon me in great trials and submitted to His guidance, and I trust that as He shall further open the way I will be ready to walk therein, relying on His help and trusting in His goodness and wisdom."<sup>35</sup>

"Whatever is God's will, that will I do," was the dominant feature of Abraham Lincoln's life, and that fact places him in the front ranks of the Christian forces regardless of his conscious religious experience; for an unsundered will is the only obstacle that can intervene between any human soul and the full favor of God.

<sup>32</sup> Six Months in the White House, p. 282.

<sup>33</sup> Lincoln Scrap-book, pp. 59-62.

<sup>34</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 174.

<sup>35</sup> North American Review, 1896, p. 667.

## CHRISTIAN TRUST

Mr. Lincoln's sublime trust in the Almighty is conclusive evidence that he was a Christian. In an address to a company of ministers, during the progress of the war, he remarked: "Gentlemen, my hope of success in this struggle rests on that immutable foundation, the justness and goodness of God."<sup>36</sup>

The following is from the President's annual message of December 1st, 1862: "And while it has not pleased the Almighty to bless us with a return of peace, we can but press on guided by the best light He gives us, trusting that in His own good time and wise way all will yet be well."<sup>37</sup>

That Mr. Lincoln's trust in God never wavered is indicated by the following from Hon. W. D. Kelley: "During our conversation, I said: 'Mr. President, don't you think the rebellion is very nearly at an end?'"

"He took his spectacles from his brow and raising his head, after a pause of a few seconds said: 'I think it is; I think it is; but if we have not Divine support and guidance there is room yet for us to fail utterly and we will fail. . . . You have nothing but Divine support and guidance to rely upon. None of us yet comprehend this rebellion and its power.'

"Thus at that time when there seemed to be nothing to invoke an expression of that kind his sense of his, and our, dependence upon God must have utterance."<sup>38</sup>

That there were times when the President's trust in God ripened into full and comforting assurance, is indicated by the following from Dr. Robert Browne: "I went over to the President's, to see how things were going there. He was engaged, but soon found an excuse to retire. When we were alone, I saw that a great change had been wrought. He was

<sup>36</sup> Rev. J. A. Reed, *Scribner's Magazine*, Vol. VI., p. 339.

<sup>37</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 93.

<sup>38</sup> Eulogies on Lincoln, Scrap-book, Vol. II., p. 2.

comparatively at his ease. His face and features, distinctly, in smoothed-out lines and cheerful, disclosed a new-born hope. He was alive again, and as he grasped my hand firmly, I felt that the faith of God was in the man, and that his soul was full of it. He stood before me, calm, resolute and determined—the Lincoln of other and brighter days. He said: ‘I am glad you have dropped in. I wanted to see you just a few minutes out of the rush about us. But things are going all right; we are going to win a victory.’ ”<sup>39</sup>

Mr. Oliver S. Munsell, president of Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Illinois, had a very pleasing acquaintance with Mr. Lincoln which began when he was only fifteen years old and continued during the years that followed. In a letter to General Chas. C. T. Collis, dated April 15th, 1893, referring to his last interview with President Lincoln in the White House, Mr. Munsell says:

“In the course of the conversation I said: ‘Mr. Lincoln, in our dear old Illinois, of which we have just been talking, we are anxious, very anxious, in regard to the issue of this terrible war. We have our opinions, our hopes, and our fears. And sometimes the suspense is terrible. The thought has come to me, as I have talked with you, that you see the whole field as no other man sees, or can see it; and it has awakened in me an intense desire to ask you, seeing as you thus do see it, will our country come through safe and alive?’

“Mr. Lincoln in the outset of our interview had seemed more worn and depressed than I had ever seen him under any circumstances. No sooner had he heard my question, than his face clouded with the heavy lines of anxious thought, and the shadows again fell around him.

“He paused a moment before he made any reply, and when he did essay to speak he made two ineffectual efforts before he could command his voice, and with trembling lips and tears trickling down his furrowed cheeks, said:

“‘I do not doubt, I never have doubted for a moment, that

<sup>39</sup> Abraham Lincoln and Men of his Time, Vol. II., p. 684.

our country would finally come through safe and undivided. But do not misunderstand me, I do not know how it can be. I do not rely on the patriotism of our people, though no people rallied around their king as ours have rallied around me. I do not trust in the bravery and devotion of the boys in blue; God bless them, though! God never gave a prince or conqueror such an army as He has given to me. Nor yet do I rely on the loyalty and skill of our generals; though, I believe, we have the best generals in the world at the head of our armies. But the God of our fathers, who raised up this country to be the refuge and asylum of the oppressed and down-trodden of all nations, will not let it perish now. I may not live to see it, and (he added after a moment's pause) I do not expect to live to see it, but God will bring us through safe.'

"I felt humbled in the presence of Mr. Lincoln's sublime faith in the God of our fathers, . . . which shamed my own doubts and fears; and from that hour my faith in the ultimate triumph of our country never again faltered, and I bade Mr. Lincoln, as it proved, a final farewell, thanking God as I had never before thanked Him, for such a leader in our country's deadly hour of peril."<sup>40</sup>

#### TRUST IN TIME OF TROUBLE

There were many times when Mr. Lincoln's trust in God was put to very severe tests; times when the trend of events seemed to indicate that the struggle for the preservation of the nation was doomed to failure; times when Mr. Lincoln lost confidence in some of his commanding generals and in the success of some of his most cherished plans and efforts; but there never came a time when his confidence in the ultimate triumph of right wavered or weakened. The appalling Chancellorsville disaster in May, 1863, enshrouded President Lincoln in the greatest darkness he ever experienced.

<sup>40</sup> General Charles H. T. Collis, *The Religion of Abraham Lincoln*, p.15.

There was every reason why the Union Army should have been victorious, and just as the forces were about to join in that fearful struggle, the commanding General gave to his army and to the President, assurance that decisive victory was certain. The existing conditions which were all thoroughly understood by the President, and the assurance received by him from General Hooker, caused him to be illy prepared for the tidings which in due time came, telling of the overwhelming defeat, and humiliating retreat, of the Union forces. By no pen has the majestic demeanor of the President upon that occasion been so graphically depicted as by that of Colonel W. O. Stoddard, one of Mr. Lincoln's private secretaries:

"That night, the last visitors in Lincoln's room were Stanton and Halleck. They went away together in silence, at somewhere near nine o'clock, and the President was left alone. Not another soul was on that floor except the one secretary, who was busy with the mail in his room across the hall from the President's; and the doors of both rooms were ajar, for the night was warm. The silence was so deep that the ticking of a clock would have been noticeable; but another sound came that was almost as regular and ceaseless. It was the tread of the President's feet as he strode slowly back and forth across the chamber in which so many Presidents of the United States had done their work. Was he to be the last of the line? The last President of the entire United States? At that hour that very question had been asked of him by the battle of Chancellorsville. If he had wavered, if he had failed in faith or courage or prompt decision, then the nation, and not the army of the Potomac, would have lost its great battle.

"Ten o'clock came, without a break in the steady march, excepting now and then a pause in turning at either wall.

"Eleven o'clock came, and then another hour of that ceaseless march so accustomed the ear to it that when, a little



COLONEL W. O. STODDARD

One of President Lincoln's private secretaries, still living at Madison, N. J.  
From a photograph presented the author by Colonel Stoddard on June 25,  
1914.



after twelve, there was a break of several minutes, the sudden silence made one put down the letters and listen.

"The President may have been at his writing table, or he may—no man knows or can guess; but at the end of the minutes, long or short, the tramp began again. Two o'clock, and he was walking yet, and when, a little after three, the secretary's task was done and he slipped noiselessly out, he turned at the head of the stairs for a moment. It was so—the last sound he heard as he went down was the footfall in Lincoln's room.

"That was not all, however. The young man had need to return early, and he was there again before eight o'clock. The President's room door was open and he went in. There sat Mr. Lincoln eating breakfast alone. He had not been out of his room; but there was a kind of cheery, hopeful, morning light on his face, instead of the funereal battle-cloud from Chancellorsville. He had watched all night, but a dawn had come, for beside his cup of coffee lay the written draft of his instructions to General Hooker to push forward to fight again. There was a decisive battle won that night in that long vigil with disaster and despair. Only a few weeks later the Army of the Potomac fought it over again as desperately, and they won it, at Gettysburg."<sup>41</sup>

#### CHRISTIAN THANKFULNESS

Nothing more clearly indicates Mr. Lincoln's close and constant fellowship with God than his oft-repeated expression of personal gratitude for favors which he recognized as coming from the hand of God. In his annual message of December 3rd, 1861, he said: "In the midst of unprecedented political troubles we have cause of great gratitude to God for unusual good health, and most abundant harvests."<sup>42</sup>

In his annual message of December 8th, 1863, is the fol-

<sup>41</sup> Abraham Lincoln—Tributes from his Associates, pp. 48-49.

<sup>42</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VII., p. 28.

lowing: "Another year of health, and of sufficiently abundant harvests, has passed. For these, and especially for the improved condition of our national affairs, our renewed and profoundest gratitude to God is due."<sup>43</sup>

One year later, in his annual message of December 6th, 1864, he said: "Again the blessings of health and abundant harvests claim our profoundest gratitude to Almighty God."<sup>44</sup>

#### THANKS FOR VICTORIES

All who are familiar with the story of Mr. Lincoln's inner life know that it was his custom when battles were in progress, to retire alone and plead with God for victory. The story of his intercessions with God during the Battle of Gettysburg is fittingly told in this volume by his own declarations and by the achievements of art.\* His fervent plea for divine aid during that memorable struggle indicates his attitude and actions upon all similar occasions.

Mrs. Pomeroy, the Christian nurse, tells us that Mr. Lincoln was engaged in prayer for victory while the battle of Port Hudson was in progress, and when news of the victory was received and he was told, "There is nothing like prayer," he promptly responded, "Yes, there is; prayer and praise go together."

So, on July 4th, 1863, in a proclamation to the nation he said: "The President announces to the country that news from the Army of the Potomac, up to 10 P. M. of the 3rd, is such as to cover that army with the highest honor, to promise a great success to the cause of the Union, and to claim the condolence of all for the many gallant fallen; and that for this he especially desires that on this day He whose will, not ours, should ever be done be everywhere remembered and revered with profoundest gratitude."<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., p. 224.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., Vol. X., p. 283.

\* See p. 377.

<sup>45</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., p. 17.

A few days later, to wit, July 15th, 1863, in announcing victories in the field, Mr. Lincoln said: "It has pleased Almighty God to hearken to the supplications and prayers of an afflicted people, and to vouchsafe to the army and navy of the United States victories on land and on sea so signal and so effective as to furnish reasonable grounds for augmented confidence that the union of these states will be maintained, their Constitution preserved, and their peace and prosperity permanently restored. . . . It is meet and right to recognize and confess the presence of the Almighty Father and the power of His hand equally in these triumphs and in these sorrows. . . . Now, therefore, be it known that I do set apart Thursday, the 6th day of August next to . . . render the homage due to the Divine Majesty for the wonderful things He has done in the nation's behalf."<sup>46</sup>

A few months later, December 7th, 1863, in announcing Union victories in East Tennessee, Mr. Lincoln said: "I recommend that all loyal people do, on receipt of this information, assemble at their places of worship and render special homage and gratitude to Almighty God for this great advancement of the national cause."<sup>47</sup>

On May 9th, 1864, in a proclamation to the nation, he said: "To the friends of Union and Liberty: Enough is known of army operations within the last five days to claim an especial gratitude to God, while what remains undone demands our most sincere prayers to, and reliance upon, Him without whom all human effort is vain. I recommend that all patriots at their homes, in their places of public worship, and wherever they may be, unite in common Thanksgiving and prayer to Almighty God."<sup>48</sup>

On the same day, May 9th, 1864, in response to a serenade, Mr. Lincoln used the following expressive language:

<sup>46</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. IX., p. 32.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Vol. X., p. 94.

"I am indeed very grateful to the brave men who have been struggling with the enemy in the field, to their noble commanders who have directed them, and especially to our Maker."<sup>49</sup>

And in response to another serenade on that memorable 9th of May, 1864, Mr. Lincoln said: "While we are grateful to all the brave men and officers for the events of the past few days, we should above all, be very grateful to Almighty God who gives us the victory."<sup>50</sup>

When the news of the downfall of the Confederate Capital reached Mr. Lincoln, on board the *Malvern*, he exclaimed: "Thank God that I have lived to see this! It seems to me I have been dreaming a horrid dream for four years, and now the nightmare is gone. I want to see Richmond."<sup>51</sup>

In his last public address, April 11th, 1865, in the following language which was characteristic of all his public life, the great ruler said: "We meet this evening not in sorrow, but in gladness of heart. The evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond, and the surrender of the principal insurgent army, give hope for a righteous and speedy peace, whose joyous expression cannot be restrained. In the midst of this, however, He from whom all blessings flow must not be forgotten."<sup>52</sup>

When told of the worshipful regard in which he was held by the former slaves, with tearful solemnity President Lincoln said: "If I have been one of the instruments in liberating this long suffering, down-trodden people, I thank God for it."

Of a similar character was his statement to Colonel McKaye of New York and Robert Dale Owen, when they told Mr. Lincoln that a white-haired former slave had said to his comrades: "Brederin, you don't know nosen' what you'se talkin' 'bout. Now, you just listen to me. Massa Linkum,

<sup>49</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 95.

<sup>51</sup> Francis F. Browne, *Everyday Life of Lincoln*, p. 568.

<sup>52</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. XI., p. 84.

he eberywhar. He knows eberyting." Then, solemnly looking up, he added—"He walk de earf like de Lord!"<sup>53</sup>

Mr. Carpenter, the artist, tells us "that Mr. Lincoln seemed much affected by this account. He did not smile, as another man might have done, but got up from his chair, and walked in silence two or three times across the floor. As he resumed his seat, he said, very impressively: "It is a momentous thing to be the instrument, under Providence, of the liberation of a race."<sup>54</sup>

#### THANKFUL FOR RE-ELECTION

Properly to appreciate Mr. Lincoln's gratitude for his re-election in 1864, it should be remembered that on August 23rd of that year he wrote his memorable statement expressing the conviction that the election in the coming November would be adverse to his administration. As elsewhere stated in this volume, there was such a tremendous popular demand for a cessation of hostilities throughout the loyal states that the election undoubtedly would have resulted in Mr. Lincoln's defeat if the claim of the opposition that the South was ready to return to the Union had not been shown to be false by the declaration of Jefferson Davis that nothing short of independence would be accepted by the South. This declaration of the Confederate leader made public, and widely distributed throughout the loyal states just previous to the election undoubtedly gave Mr. Lincoln the meager majority of the popular vote which resulted in an overwhelming majority in the electoral college. Having passed through that strenuous campaign in which he was unjustly opposed and cruelly vilified by leaders of his own party, and having been wrought up to the conviction which caused his serious and settled apprehension of defeat, Mr. Lincoln's gratitude for re-election found expression in some of the most beautiful utterances of his life.

On the evening of November 9th, 1864, in response to

<sup>53</sup> Six Months in the White House, p. 209.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

a serenade of congratulation upon his re-election, with characteristic modesty and heartfelt appreciation he said: "I am thankful to God for this approval of the people; but while deeply grateful for this mark of their confidence in me, if I know my heart, my gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph. I do not impugn the motives of any one opposed to me. It is no pleasure to me to triumph over any one, but I give thanks to the Almighty for this evidence of the people's resolution to stand by free government and the rights of humanity."<sup>55</sup>

On the next evening, November 10th, 1864, upon a like occasion, he expressed his recognition of the hand of God in his re-election as follows: "While I am deeply sensible to the high compliment of a re-election, and deeply grateful, as I trust, to Almighty God, for having directed my countrymen to a right conclusion, as I think, for their own good, it adds nothing to my satisfaction that any other man may be disappointed or pained by the result."<sup>56</sup>

According to the provisions of the constitution, the verdict of the people at the polls was officially canvassed by a joint convention of the two houses of Congress on the 9th of February, 1865. At that time in response to the notification by a committee of Congress of the result of the electoral vote, Mr. Lincoln said: "With deep gratitude to my countrymen for this mark of their confidence . . . and above all with an unshaken faith in the Supreme Ruler of nations, I accept this trust."<sup>57</sup>

#### PREPARED FOR DEATH

That the work of divine grace in a trusting, obedient soul, includes preparation for death and for the future life was accepted by Mr. Lincoln as unquestionably true. He regarded such a work as of priceless value, and therefore, on February

<sup>55</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., p. 262.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 264-265.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., Vol. XI., p. 10.

3rd, 1842, he wrote to his friend, Joshua F. Speed, whose wife at the time was seriously ill, stating that if she should be called away by death it would be "a great consolation to know that she is so well prepared to meet it."<sup>58</sup>

At the time Mr. Lincoln thus expressed his high estimate of a conscious preparation for death, and of a religious experience in making that preparation, he was in the prime of his young manhood, only thirty-three years of age, and was writing to his close friend for the purpose of contributing in largest possible measure to that friend's consolation in the sorrow of apprehended bereavement.

In a letter written in January, 1851, he reminded his dying father of the assurances of divine compassion and of the future life which are adapted to minister consolation in such an hour.

With the realization of human need of a preparation for death which is clearly indicated, Mr. Lincoln, on the 22nd day of February, 1861, while on his way to Washington to assume the duties of the Presidency, in a speech at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, among other things stated: "I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by."<sup>59</sup>

At another time he remarked: "I do not consider that I have ever accomplished anything without God, and if it be His will that I must die by the hand of an assassin, I must be resigned. I must do my duty as I see it and leave the rest with God."<sup>60</sup>

During his administration as President, in speaking of well known plots against his life, he said: "But I see no other safeguard against these murderers, but to be always ready to die, as Christ advises it."<sup>61</sup>

At a time of high exhilaration, in contemplation of duty

<sup>58</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. I., p. 186.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., Vol. VI., p. 158.

<sup>60</sup> H. C. Whitney, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*, p. 278.

<sup>61</sup> *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*, pp. 706-711.

and danger, Mr. Lincoln stated: "I am in God's hands; let Him do with me what seemeth good to Him."<sup>62</sup>

In the words of no earthly ruler known to history is there found more of potential pathos than the following: "Now I see the end of this terrible conflict, with the same joy of Moses, when at the end of his trying forty years in the wilderness; and I pray my God to grant me to see the days of peace and untold prosperity, which will follow this cruel war, as Moses asked God to see the other side of Jordan, and enter the promised land. But, do you know, that I hear in my soul, as the voice of God, giving me the rebuke which was given to Moses?"

"Yes, every time that my soul goes to God to ask the favor of seeing the other side of the Jordan, and eating the fruits of that peace, after which I am longing with such an unspeakable desire, do you know that there is a still but solemn voice which tells me that I will see those things only from a long distance, and that I will be among the dead when the nation, which God granted me to lead through those awful trials, will cross the Jordan, and dwell in that land of promise."<sup>63</sup>

In connection with the above statements to Father Chiquy, Mr. Lincoln expressed his conviction that he would be the victim of assassination, and added:

"So many plots already have been made against my life that it is really a miracle that they have all failed." This Mr. Lincoln considered the more remarkable because, as he at that time said and as the world now knows, those plots "were in the hands of skilled murderers evidently trained" by his implacable enemies. "But," he said, "can we expect that God will make a perpetual miracle to save my life? I believe not." And with deep feeling he added: "I hope and pray that He will hear no murmur from me when I fall for my nation's sake." Those solemn words were spoken when Mr. Lincoln

<sup>62</sup> W. M. Thayer, *From Pioneer Home to White House*, p. 352.

<sup>63</sup> *Fifty Years in the Church of Rome*, pp. 706-711.

knew the dogs of death were on his track, eager to overtake him. No man ever occupied the Presidential office so beset and pursued by dangers as he was. And the apprehension of the ultimate success of the plots against his life did not arise wholly from his knowledge of the murderous hatred of some who, at that time, were seeking to overthrow the nation.

Mr. Lincoln fully understood, as the world has since learned, that bitter enmities had been aroused against him by certain features of his law practice in Illinois, and that those enmities had grown more bitter, vindictive and unscrupulous with the progress of time. The way from Springfield to Washington was thickly set with perils which he avoided only by constant vigilance and heroic action. Malignant enemies gnashed their teeth in rage when, by an unexpected midnight dash, he reached the capital city notwithstanding their infamous purposes and plots to terminate his life at Baltimore.

And Mr. Lincoln was fully cognizant of the fact that his first inauguration was successfully conducted because the most skillful and ample preparation had been made to protect him from assassination at that time. The world did not then know, but Mr. Lincoln did, that all the space where enemies might seek to conceal bombs, in the basement of the Capitol and in other places of the building, was guarded by men thoroughly organized and armed to guard him and effectually to crush the incipient rebellion some enemies of the nation had planned to start during the inaugural ceremonies.

Mr. Lincoln further knew that the shot, which on a dark night sent a bullet through his hat, just above his head, as he was riding alone to the Soldiers' Home, was fired by an enemy who was seeking his life.\* He knew that his personal enemies had joined forces with the enemies of his country, and were untiring in efforts to kill him, and he was appre-

\* See p. 532.

hensive they would accomplish their purpose. Yet, in spite of all this he solemnly declared himself to be always prepared for death, which certainly implied that he was a Christian.

### CLAIMED CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES

The self-depreciation which for years caused Mr. Lincoln to refrain from claiming that he was a Christian did not prevent him from exercising the Christian's sacred privilege of prayer. During all of his Presidency, according to his own statements, he was a daily visitant at the Mercy-seat where the sweet incense of his prayers ascended to the throne of God. He tells us that sometimes his daily prayer would consist of not more than ten words "but those words were always uttered." That daily communion led to special seasons of fervent intercession at crisis periods, when he wrought mightily in prayer with God for the nation, as did Moses for ancient Israel, even to the extent of remonstrating with Jehovah on behalf of his own cause when He seemed inclined to turn from His chosen people. Moses was on such terms with God that he ventured to interpose for the safeguarding of His honor and renown.<sup>64</sup> Jeremiah was so devoted to the Lord that he boldly said: "Do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory,"<sup>65</sup> and Abraham Lincoln was not less jealous for God's honor when during the progress of the battle of Gettysburg, he told the Lord that the nation's cause "was His cause."

Such loving loyalty to God and such zeal in interceding for His cause, and in safeguarding His honor are indicative of a high state of grace. And the "solemn vow" which Mr. Lincoln made on that memorable occasion, embraced all that is included in full Christian consecration, and was sealed by his declaration, "And He did stand by you boys, and I *will* stand by Him." That agonizing intercession and that sacred covenant with God were followed, as he tells us, by "a sweet peace" which gave assurance to his satisfaction that

<sup>64</sup> Num. 13 : 14-19.

<sup>65</sup> Jer. 14 : 21.

his prayer was answered, and bears witness to all the attentive world that he was on terms of intimate fellowship with the Almighty.

It is natural for the human heart to cry out to God for help at times of sore distress and need, but a consciousness of access to a throne of grace and a satisfying assurance of acceptance, such as Mr. Lincoln had, are the privileges of none but those who are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

The strongest and indeed the conclusive evidence that Abraham Lincoln was a Christian was his

#### CHRISTIAN CHARACTER AND LIFE

Attorney General Bates, while a member of his Cabinet, said: "Mr. Lincoln comes very near being a perfect man."

Secretary Seward declared Mr. Lincoln to be the best man he had ever known.

F. B. Carpenter, the artist, declared that Mr. Lincoln's conversation was always absolutely pure and proper.

Dr. Stone, his family physician, said: "I affirm that Mr. Lincoln is the purest hearted man with whom I ever came in contact."

Father Chiniquy said: "I found him the most perfect type of Christian I ever met."

"His public life was a continuous service of God and his fellowmen controlled and guided by the Golden Rule," was the declaration of Hon. L. E. Chittenden.

Dr. J. G. Holland says: "Moderate, frank, truthful, gentle, forgiving, loving, just, Mr. Lincoln will always be remembered as eminently a Christian President."

Hon. J. D. Long declared that "no act of his life was ever counted in derogation of the integrity of his life and example."

Sir Edward Mallet was proud to say "he left upon me the impression of a sterling son of God."

The *Monitor*, a Catholic organ published at San Francisco,

speaks of "his pre-eminently Christian character" and declares that he was "at all times a sincere and consistent follower of the gentle Nazarene, and first and foremost a Christian man."

"His spirit was that of one who communed with the Most High," said the distinguished statesman and author, Hon. Wm. H. Smith.

None knew Mr. Lincoln more intimately than did Judge Henry C. Whitney, who says: "More than any other man in modern life he completely fulfilled the requirement and justified the asseveration that 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widow in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'"

Major J. B. Merwin, who was closely associated with Mr. Lincoln for many years, says: "He came to be one of the most profoundly Christian men I ever knew."

Former President Roosevelt says: "If ever there was a man who practically applied what is taught in our churches it was Abraham Lincoln."

John Lothrop Motley says: "Never was such vast political power placed in purer hands; never did a heart remain more humble and unsophisticated after the highest prizes of earthly ambition had been attained."

This testimony to Mr. Lincoln's Christian character and life, which might be indefinitely enlarged, is fittingly closed by the declaration of Hon. John Hay, one of his private secretaries, that Abraham Lincoln was "one of the most devoted and faithful servants of Almighty God who ever sat in the highest places of the world. He was the greatest man since Christ."

#### HOME AND FAMILY LIFE

In his home life, Abraham Lincoln gave strong evidence of his high-toned, Christian character. Never was there a more loyal and loving husband, or a more devoted father than he. His ardent attachment to his wife is mentioned at



PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND FAMILY

From the painting by F. B. Carpenter.



length elsewhere in this volume. The following statement by the Hon. W. D. Kelley of Pennsylvania, gives an added touch to the faithful representation of a home and family scene in the famous picture of "Tad" and his father, referred to below:

"His intercourse with his family was beautiful as that with his friends. I think that father never loved his children more fondly than he. The President never seemed grander in my sight than when, stealing upon him in the evening, I would find him with a book open before him, as he is represented in the popular photograph, with little 'Tad' beside him. There were of course a great many curious books sent to him, and it seemed to be one of the special delights of his life to open those books at such an hour, that his boy could stand beside him, and they could talk as he turned over the pages, the father thus giving to the son a portion of that care and attention of which he was ordinarily deprived by the duties of office pressing upon him."<sup>66</sup>

As indicating that this fellowship between Mr. Lincoln and his little son extended also to the perusal of the pages of the Scripture and was of frequent occurrence, the following is significant: "Captain Mix, being for a time in charge of President Lincoln's bodyguard, was upon terms of very close intimacy with the President. He saw him when others did not, and he saw him many times as he was not seen by others. So close were his relations with the President and his family that the Captain often took breakfast with them at their summer residence at the Soldiers' Home. This fact, and the high character of Captain Mix, give peculiar force to the following statement by him: 'Many times have I listened to our most eloquent preachers, but never with the same feeling of awe and reverence as when our Christian President, with his arm around his son, with his deep, earnest tone, each morning read a chapter from the Bible.'"<sup>67</sup>

Mrs. Pomeroy, as nurse, ministered to the afflicted mem-

<sup>66</sup> *Six Months in the White House*, pp. 92-93.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261.

bers of the President's family for several months and the great depth to which Mr. Lincoln was moved by his affection for the members of his family, and by the bereavement through which he passed, is indicated by the following:

"On arriving at the Executive Mansion, Miss Dix conducted her into the green room, where the lifeless remains of Willie had just been laid out. Thence, she was taken to Mrs. Lincoln's chamber, where she was lying quite sick. From Mrs. Lincoln's room she was led into an adjoining one where little 'Tad' lay in a dying condition. The physicians had relinquished all hope of his recovery and he was not expected to live twenty-four hours. Mr. Lincoln was sitting by him, 'the very picture of despair.' 'Mrs. Pomeroy, Mr. President,' said Miss Dix. Mr. Lincoln arose, and very heartily shook her hand, saying: 'I am glad to see you; I have heard of you. You have come to a sad house.' His deep emotion choked further utterance and the tears streamed down his careworn cheeks."<sup>68</sup>

"Several weeks after the death of Willie, Mr. Lincoln, with several members of his Cabinet, spent a few days at Fortress Monroe, watching military operations upon the Peninsula. He improved his spare time there in reading Shakespeare. One day he was reading 'Hamlet' when he called to his private secretary: 'Come here, Colonel; I want to read you a passage.' The Colonel responded, when the President read the discussion on ambition between Hamlet and his courtiers, and the soliloquy in which conscience debates about a future state. Then he read passages from 'Macbeth,' and finally opened to the third act of 'King John,' where Constance bewails her lost boy. Closing the book, and recalling the words:

" 'And, father cardinal, I have heard you say  
That we shall see and know our friends in heaven;  
If that be true I shall see my boy again,'

<sup>68</sup> William M. Thayer, *From Pioneer Home to White House*, p. 346.

Mr. Lincoln said: 'Colonel, did you ever dream of a lost friend, and feel that you were holding sweet communion with that friend, and yet have a sad consciousness that it was not reality?—just so I dream of my boy Willie.' Overcome with emotion, he dropped his head on the table and sobbed aloud.

"Beautiful example of paternal love in the highest place of the land! The million of fathers over whom he ruled found in him a worthy father to imitate."<sup>69</sup>

Few children ever more deeply interested mankind than did dear little "Tad," President Lincoln's youngest son. After the death of Willie the little fellow crept into his father's life in a marvelous measure. Tearfully touching is the story told of the nights when the careworn and weary ruler, while seeking the rest he sorely needed, would hear a familiar tap upon his chamber door and answering would find his darling boy waiting outside to feel his father's loving embraces and to cuddle up to him in bed where he would remain until morning. Such incidents were common during those months in the White House, and none but those with a flinty heart can read with tearless eyes the following by F. B. Carpenter:

"Little 'Tad's' frantic grief upon being told that his father had been shot was alluded to in the Washington correspondence of the time. For twenty-four hours the little fellow was perfectly inconsolable. Sunday morning, however, the sun rose in unclouded splendor, and in his simplicity he looked upon this as a token that his father was happy. 'Do you think my father has gone to heaven?' he asked of a gentleman who had called upon Mrs. Lincoln. 'I have not a doubt of it,' was the reply. 'Then,' he exclaimed, in his broken way, 'I am glad he has gone there, for he never was happy after he came here. This was not a good place for him!'"<sup>70</sup>

<sup>69</sup> William M. Thayer, *From Pioneer Home to White House*, pp. 356-357.

<sup>70</sup> *Six Months in the White House*, p. 293.

## WHY NOT A CHURCH MEMBER

"Blessed be God who in this our great trial giveth us the Churches." This very expressive utterance, made in response to the greetings of a company of ministers, indicates Mr. Lincoln's ardent affection for the Christian church in all its branches, and his high appreciation of its influence for good. There are many similar declarations by Mr. Lincoln of the same import and equally clear and emphatic. And yet ardent as was his attachment to the church, unequivocal as was his belief in its divine origin, faithful as was his attendance upon its services, liberal as were his contributions to its work, and steadfast as was his purpose to live in accordance with its requirements and teachings, Mr. Lincoln never became a church member. There were two things either one of which was in itself sufficient to prevent him from uniting with the Church. The first was

## LENGTHY AND OBJECTIONABLE CREEDS.

Respecting this Hon. H. C. Deming says: "I am here reminded of an impressive remark which he made to me and which I shall never forget. He said he had never united himself to any church because he found difficulty in giving his assent without mental reservation to the long, complicated statement of Christian doctrine which characterized their articles of belief and confessions of faith. 'When any church, he said, will inscribe over its altar as its sole qualification for membership the Saviour's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart and with all my soul.'"<sup>71</sup>

To his pastor, Dr. P. D. Gurley, and to others, Mr. Lin-

<sup>71</sup> Henry Champion Deming, Eulogy on Lincoln, before the General Assembly, Hartford, Conn., June 8th, 1865.

coln made declarations identical in significance and almost identical in language. In the Deming interview he does not express any objection to the doctrines of the church, but to what he designates "the long, complicated statements" of those doctrines. His own declarations, already quoted, prove conclusively that he was a firm believer in all the essential doctrines of Christianity; but he could not accept those doctrines as stated in church symbols. In this he was doubtless in harmony with a large and growing sentiment in the church, as is shown by the great labor which during recent years it has bestowed upon the work of changing the statements of its doctrines so as to remove all needlessly objectionable features. And the great progress made in this revision of church symbols, since the foregoing statements were made by Mr. Lincoln, fully justifies his objection to the manner in which Christian doctrines at that time were stated. His course in this matter was characteristic of his prevailing attitude and shows the unusual extent to which he was governed by his conscientious regard for absolute truthfulness. He knew that the "sole qualification for membership" in the Presbyterian Church, which he regularly attended, was trusting obedience to Christ, but in his estimation such membership included an acceptance of all the doctrinal declarations of the church symbols, and he was unwilling to appear as approving even with "mental reservation" doctrinal statements which he did not fully accept. He did without scruple take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, which permitted and protected slavery, but he regarded the covenant of church membership as too peculiarly sacred to be taken without full and unqualified approval of all the doctrines held and taught by that organization.

Mr. Lincoln's declaration of his willingness, with all his heart and soul, to unite with a church having no condition of membership but supreme love for God and for mankind, indicates his high estimate of Christian living. That his standard is higher than are the conditions of membership in any church,

and is far above the possibility of human compliance, does not to any extent weaken the force of his belief that it should be the aim and effort of every Christian to attain unto that standard, and that nothing more or less than that should be required for membership in the church. This candid explanation by Mr. Lincoln of the reason why he never became a church member is an eloquent plea for greater brevity and simplicity in church symbols. Church creeds usually have been formulated at times of strife, and in the white heat of controversy. In many cases they have proved a barrier to church membership as they did to Mr. Lincoln even after his faith, experience, and life had given assurance that he was a Christian. We shall lose one of the most important lessons of his life if we fail duly to consider its bearings upon this question.

Quite as potential as were lengthy and objectionable creeds in keeping Mr. Lincoln from becoming a church member was

#### CHURCH TOLERANCE OF SLAVERY.

"If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel." This declaration of Mr. Lincoln, made in 1864, and already cited, expresses his lifelong convictions and feelings toward slavery.

On the 1st of July, 1854, he carefully wrote two "Fragments" in which he expressed his convictions concerning that institution. In one of these, he characterized slavery as "the great durable curse of the race," by which labor is made "the double-refined curse of God upon His creatures."<sup>72</sup>

His constant claim that slavery should be abolished "wherever our votes can legally reach it" was based upon his conviction that slavery was morally wrong. So deep was his realization of its evil character, and so dominant in his soul was the conviction that it should be unyieldingly opposed that at the seeming sacrifice of every personal ambition he

<sup>72</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., p. 185.

fought it with religious vehemence and determination. In view of the extent to which slavery was entrenched and the strength and determination with which it was and would be defended, he exclaimed: "The problem is too mighty for me—may God in His mercy superintend the solution."<sup>73</sup>

This impassioned appeal to God shows conclusively that Mr. Lincoln's opposition to slavery was prompted by the highest Christian motives. Believing, as he did, that slavery was inherently wrong he appealed to the Almighty for aid and direction in opposing and resisting it. And he naturally and rightfully looked to the church and to Christians for sympathy and co-operation in his warfare against that wrong.

But instead of finding the sympathy and aid which he believed he should receive from the church and from Christian people, he found the church in all the slave-holding states filled and ruled by slave holders, and in the free states having a large and influential pro-slavery membership. During the early years here referred to churches had not divided on the slavery question as they did later, but maintained organic unity throughout the nation. In all the slave states slave holders were in absolute control of the church, and did not permit any church influence in opposition to slavery. No word against slavery was permitted in any pulpit of the South, and, as Mr. Lincoln said in 1860, "the very teachers of religion have come to defend it from the Bible and to claim for it a divine character and sanction."<sup>74</sup>

No antislavery articles appeared in any church paper published in the slave states and no deliverance of the church councils, conferences, or assemblies in those states contained any declaration unfriendly to slavery. In the free states the pro-slavery element in the principal churches was strong and aggressive and excluded antislavery teachings from the pulpit and from church organs and deliverances. It was declared to be "preaching politics" for ministers to speak against

<sup>73</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., p. 280.

<sup>74</sup> Holland's Abraham Lincoln, p. 238.

slavery in their sermons, and that was forbidden and effectively prohibited. The exclusion of slave holders from church membership by some of the smaller churches, and the anti-slavery views of some people in other churches, in Mr. Lincoln's opinion, accentuated the enormity of church tolerance of slavery.

A still stronger influence in making conspicuous the pro-slavery attitude of the church was the open espousal of the antislavery cause by people not connected with the evangelical churches. The great abolitionists, Garrison and Phillips, with their less distinguished associates, were not church people, and their courage and fervor in denouncing and resisting slavery caused the attitude of the church to that institution to appear very objectionable to Mr. Lincoln. There was, as he believed and said, a "moral aspect" to the slavery question which made imperative the duty of the church and of its entire membership to oppose it. Politically he could and did submit to the continuance of slavery in the states where it existed, for it was there under the protection of the national Constitution, for which he had the most profound reverence; but religiously he could not regard slavery otherwise than with unqualified disapproval. While he believed the government was solemnly bound by the Constitution to protect slavery where it then existed, he also believed that the church was more solemnly bound by the requirements of Christianity to protest against it as inherently wrong and to seek its destruction. Therefore, the pro-slavery attitude of the church and of many Christian people was so at variance with Mr. Lincoln's convictions as to be to him an insuperable obstacle to church membership. He regarded the sacred covenants of church membership as including an approval of the attitude of the church to slavery, and that approval his absolute truthfulness made it impossible for him to give. His course in this matter was like that of vast numbers of other high-minded antislavery people. Thousands of Christian people withdrew from the church because of its attitude to slavery; and for

the same reason multitudes refused to become church members. Many brilliant preachers renounced their ministerial standing and went from the pulpit to the platform that they might with unrestrained freedom denounce slavery, and the pro-slavery attitude of the church. An antislavery pamphlet bore the title, "The Brotherhood of Thieves," as a designation of the connivance of church people with slavery, and the land was flooded with literature of a similar character. This extreme hostility to the church because of its attitude to slavery, was never shared by Mr. Lincoln; but his protest against the attitude of the church toward slavery was effectively though silently registered in the profoundly significant absence of his name from the roll of church communicants.

It was characteristic of Mr. Lincoln to remain silent relative to these matters, but there came a time when his long-suppressed feelings found expression in a manner which could not be misunderstood. He had long and patiently fought against the cohorts of slavery without one word of complaint because many church people were arrayed against him, but when he first learned that of the twenty-three pastors of his home city, only three were supporting him as a candidate for President, he was filled with amazement and grief, which found expression in language more vehement than he is known to have employed at any other time, and in actions more expressive of agitation than were exhibited by him upon any other occasion during his life. This was at the historic Bate-man interview, a full account of which appears elsewhere in this work. During that interview, as Dr. Holland tells us, Mr. Lincoln "arose and walked up and down the room in the effort to retain or regain his self-possession," and when he spoke it was "with a trembling voice and cheeks wet with tears." "Here," said he, "are twenty-three ministers of different denominations and all of them are against me but three, and here are a great many prominent members of the churches, a very large majority of whom are against me. . . . These men well know that I am for freedom . . . and that my

opponents are for slavery . . . and yet with this Book (the New Testament) in their hands in the light of which human bondage cannot live a moment, they are going to vote against me. I do not understand it at all.”<sup>75</sup>

Dr. Holland adds: “Everything he said was of a peculiarly deep, tender and religious tone and all was tinged with a touching melancholy.”<sup>76</sup>

Mr. Lincoln's great agitation during this interview was a revelation to Dr. Bateman. He had never before seen him so disturbed and grieved. He was usually calm and serene and never was he so manifestly perturbed as upon this occasion. It was late in October, 1860, only a few days before his first election as President, and the outlook at that time was assuring. The “October States,” as they were then called, Pennsylvania, Ohio and others—had held elections for state officers giving large republican majorities which indicated that Mr. Lincoln's selection in November was certain. There was, therefore, every reason for his being in a state of exhilaration concerning his own aspirations and prospects, and the success of the cause he was seeking to promote. He was not in the least disturbed by the knowledge that some of his neighbors, though devoted personal friends, were adherents of the opposing party and would therefore vote against him. But the opposition of the church, as represented by its pastors and leading members, was unspeakably painful and disturbing to him. As far as known he had never before expressed or intimated a thought that he had a special and valid claim upon the support of church people. As a Whig he stood for issues which had no moral or religious features, but when the slavery question became a political issue he believed the Christian people as a unit should be on the side of freedom. As Dr. Holland says: “Of one thing Mr. Lincoln felt sure that in the great struggle before him he ought to be supported by the Christian sentiment and the Christian influence of the nation. Nothing pained him more than the thought that

<sup>75</sup> Holland's *Life of Abraham Lincoln*, p. 237.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

a man professing the religion of Jesus Christ, and especially a man who taught the religion of Jesus Christ, should be opposed to him. He felt that every religious man—every man who believed in God, in the principles of everlasting justice, in truth and righteousness—should be opposed to slavery, and should support and assist him in the struggle against inhumanity and oppression which he felt to be imminent. It was to him a great mystery how those who preached the gospel to the poor, and who, by their divine Master, were sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and to set at liberty those that were bruised, could be his opponents, and enemies.”<sup>77</sup>

Nor was Mr. Lincoln's agitation at the Bateman interview when he learned that the recognized representatives of the church were against him, caused by any feelings of wounded personal pride, but by the disappointment of his confident expectations respecting the fidelity of Christian people to their sacred trust. So exalted were his conceptions of the character and mission of the church that when he found it in what he regarded as manifest apostasy, his heart was sorely troubled. He loved the church as God's agency in the world to safeguard human rights and to promote human welfare, and his soul cried out in anguish in view of its unfaithfulness.

To this was added his painful apprehension that the pro-slavery attitude of pastors and their people would bring upon the nation the swift and severe judgments of the Almighty. It was this apprehension which wrung from his aching heart the prophetic exclamation, “Now the cup of iniquity is full and the vials of wrath will be poured out.”

That conditions in the church at that crisis period were such as to cause Mr. Lincoln bitter disappointment and grief, must be to every follower of Christ an occasion for humiliation and regret. And in the scenes connected with the Bateman interview, and in the absence of Mr. Lincoln's name from the enrollment of the members of the church, is a very

<sup>77</sup> Life of Abraham Lincoln, pp. 235-236.

solemn admonition to the church ever and boldly to maintain its divinely appointed attitude to the cause of righteousness among the children of men. How many Christian people of great worth have been kept out of the church by the unfaithfulness of God's people to questions and movements of moral and civic reform!

However, after the first assault upon the flag at Fort Sumter there was no longer occasion for humiliation on account of the condition and attitude of the church in the loyal states. Treason unmasked slavery and revealed it in its true character, and the antislavery membership of the churches in the North at once rose to dominance, and pro-slavery influences disappeared. Enthusiastic religious patriotism characterized all the services of the church, and from pulpit and pew brave Christian men promptly responded to the call for troops.

Slavery and rebellion at once became identical in public thought and the church responded magnificently to the requirements of the occasion. Many times during his administration President Lincoln expressed his appreciation of the church and his gratification at the services it rendered the government.

The convictions, however, expressed by Mr. Lincoln to Dr. Bateman concerning the rightful attitude of Christianity and of Christian people to questions of practical morality and righteousness were never by him either retracted or in the least degree modified. On May 30th, 1864, in a letter to Senator James R. Doolittle and others, Mr. Lincoln expressed himself upon this subject with great frankness and force. And in his opinion one of the most objectionable features of the rebellion was the claim that it was prompted by Christian motives.

On the 3rd of December, 1864, in an interview with two Southern women, he spoke with unusual severity upon this subject, and so desirous was he that his views, as then expressed, should be widely known that with his own hand he carefully prepared an account of the incident which he read

to Noah Brooks, who, at the President's request, secured its publication in the Washington *Chronicle* precisely as it was written by Mr. Lincoln. It was entitled, "The President's Latest, Shortest and Best Speech," and was as follows:

"On Thursday of last week, two ladies from Tennessee came before the President, asking the release of their husbands held as prisoners of war at Johnson's Island. They were put off until Friday, when they came again, and were again put off until Saturday. At each of the interviews one of the ladies urged that her husband was a religious man, and on Saturday the President ordered the release of the prisoners, when he said to this lady: 'You say your husband is a religious man; tell him when you meet him, that I say I am not much of a judge of religion, but that, in my opinion, the religion that sets men to rebel and fight against their government, because, as they think, that government does not sufficiently help some men to eat their bread in the sweat of other men's faces, is not the sort of religion upon which people can get to heaven.' " <sup>78</sup>

In his account of this affair Mr. Brooks says: "Mr. Lincoln showed a surprising amount of gratification over this trifle and set his signature at the bottom of the page of the manuscript at my suggestion, in order to authenticate the autograph." <sup>79</sup>

The account of the affair as written and signed by Mr. Lincoln was reproduced in exact facsimile in the above-mentioned magazine, which removes all possible doubt of its authenticity.

The claim that slavery and the Rebellion were sanctioned by the Christian religion was referred to by President Lincoln in his second Inaugural Address with that delicate charity which pervaded that sublime production, and yet in terms which make it impossible to doubt his severe displeasure at the reproach upon Christianity implied in that claim. The

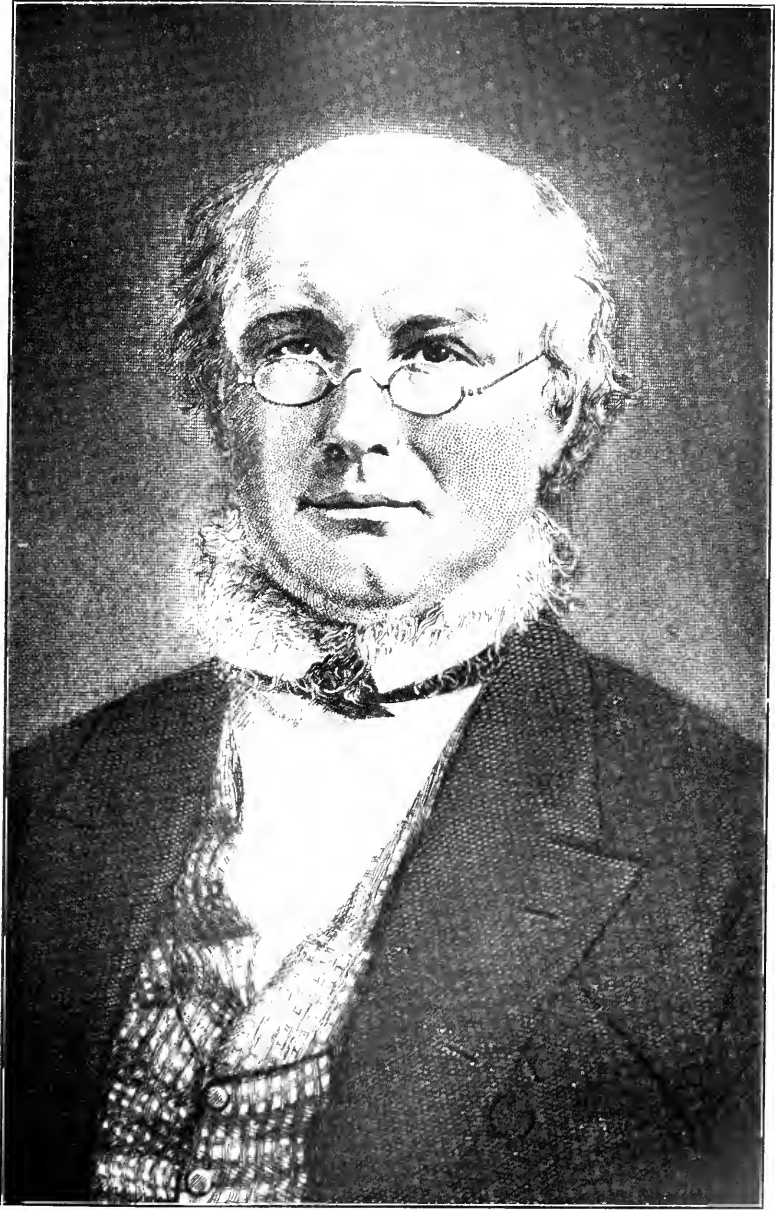
<sup>78</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. X., pp. 279-280.

<sup>79</sup> *Scribner's Magazine*, February, 1878, p. 566.

ardent affection which Mr. Lincoln had ever cherished for the church was greatly intensified and strengthened by the loyal Christian patriotism which during the war pervaded the church, and of the religious heroism displayed by church people at the front and in all loyal states.

#### INTENDED TO UNITE WITH THE CHURCH

And during the latter part of "his weary and chastened life," he repeatedly expressed his purpose, "at the first suitable opportunity, to make a profession of religion," by uniting with the church. The assassin's bullet, however, intervened and that purpose was not carried out, but, although his name was never entered upon any roll of membership of the visible church on earth, who can doubt that his name was recorded in "the Lamb's Book of Life"?



HORACE GREELEY



## VI

### LINCOLN AND HORACE GREELEY

#### A HITHERTO UNCOMPLETED CHAPTER OF AMERICAN HISTORY

**W**HEN I was a child, my heart many times was deeply moved by heated discussions at our frontier Ohio home between my father and callers who approved and attempted to defend American slavery. I say "attempted to defend," for to me it seemed only a feeble effort upon their part, as we sat by the crackling fire, for my father—whom I adored—was a master in argument and he never was so vehement and irresistible as when denouncing slavery. And during the long winter evenings, as I listened to those backwoods debates, the emotions which swept over my youthful soul were like surging billows that dash upon a stormy ocean beach.

A few years later, while I was only a lad, for one silver dollar I sold to a neighbor some choice young fruit trees, which it had required more than three years of care and labor to produce. That silver dollar was larger in my eyes than was the "big, round moon." But far greater than the joy and pride of being the rightful owner of such wealth was my delight at being permitted to invest that dollar in a year's subscription to the *New York Weekly Tribune*. And during the year that followed, whenever the exacting duties of a toiling farmer boy would permit, I feasted mind and soul upon the literary pabulum which filled the columns of that great antislavery oracle, chiefly from the pen of Horace Greeley, the most gifted and influential journalist of his day.

Thus early I learned to revere the name of Horace Greeley and unconsciously to imbibe the spirit with which he de-

nounced human slavery and assailed the propagandists of that institution. The *Tribune* was the Bible, and Horace Greeley the prophet of the abolition movement. And what was true of me was true of the multitudes throughout the nation who were constant readers of the *Tribune* and who were becoming more and more antagonistic to the institution of slavery. By his matchless force of intellect, and the authority of truth, he held undisputed sway over the hosts that gathered to his standard. Many were led by their hostility to slavery into a spirit and attitude of hostility to the Constitution, and the government which gave that institution protection. Only a limited number, however, of the antislavery people were borne to such extremes. Those who were more conservative, sought with diligence for some method by which their disapproval of slavery could be made effective in accordance with the provisions of the national Constitution. The movements of those antislavery forces were like the mobilizing of a great army, and the leader of leaders in those movements was Horace Greeley. His masterful editorials in the *Tribune* were like the bugle blasts from a great commander calling the hosts to battle.

In their efforts to obey those calls to duty the people rallied around divers standards. In the midst of political chaos the standard of slavery restriction was lifted up and, as by magic, the republican party came into being, standing upon a platform of but one distinctive plank—the prohibition of the extension of slavery into the Federal Territories.

To an alert, enthusiastic lad those early movements were of thrilling interest, and not less inspiring was the later crystallization of that young party into effective cohesion. In the vicinity where my lot was cast, not one phase of this movement escaped my attention; and in 1856 a tall tamarack flag-pole stood in front of our house, holding aloft our starry banner to bear witness to my interest in the efforts for the election to the Presidency of Colonel John C. Fremont, the gallant young "Path Finder" of California. The nomination

of Fremont was very largely the result of the efforts of Horace Greeley, who never tired of sounding the praises of his chosen hero. Not less industrious and effective was Mr. Greeley in work which lay between the unsuccessful Fremont campaign in 1856 and the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860.

It would be natural to suppose that after these many years of heroic struggle to secure the election of an antislavery President, Mr. Greeley would ever be found in loyal support of the administration, to the election of which he had been so large a contributor. But the history of the administration of Abraham Lincoln never will be fully written until the story of the strange and unfortunate course pursued by Horace Greeley toward him is told with greater fullness than it yet has been given to the world. In giving that story, I wish to bear witness even more fully than yet I have done, to my great admiration for Horace Greeley and to my loyalty to his leadership.

In the early stages of his administration I was not partial to Abraham Lincoln. His nomination as the republican candidate for President was my first great and grievous political disappointment. My ideal of an all-around American statesman and leader was the Hon. Salmon P. Chase, the idol of the antislavery forces and Governor of my native Ohio. The tremendous personality of Governor Chase, his heroic proportions, his majestic bearing, immense intellectual force, and sterling integrity were well calculated to win for him the admiration and loyalty which it was my delight to contribute in unstinted measure. When I saw him on the platform I was thrilled by his magnificent measurements, his wonderful voice and his words of rare wisdom; and knowing as I did his great ability, it seemed to me that he was chosen of God to be the nation's standard-bearer. And I was heartbroken when I first learned that Abraham Lincoln, of whom we then knew so little, had been chosen as our candidate for President; and although I supported Mr. Lincoln with hearty en-

thusiasm, making more than one hundred speeches for his election, I was not quite satisfied with his conservative policy respecting slavery during the early months of his administration. Therefore, I was prepared to judge of the infelicities between the President and the great journalist without partiality for Mr. Lincoln or prejudice against Mr. Greeley. These infelicities should be known and remembered by the American people that better counsels may prevail during the future of our history.

Why should there have been infelicities between two such men as Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, and Horace Greeley, leading journalist of the nation? Each had been a poor boy toiling for his daily bread, and with meager advantages for development. Each espoused the cause of the Whig party when he came to man's estate. Each was a man of great generosity of nature. Each was constitutionally, and in sentiment, thoroughly opposed to slavery. Each held the other in high esteem. They had been associated for a brief period in Congress in 1848, and Mr. Greeley had recorded his high regard for Mr. Lincoln at that time. Mr. Greeley listened with keen attention to Mr. Lincoln's Cooper Institute address on February 27th, 1860, and not only spoke of it in the *Tribune* in terms of highest praise, but published the address in full for nation-wide distribution. And so high was the estimate Mr. Lincoln placed upon Horace Greeley that early in his administration he declared that Mr. Greeley's earnest support of his administration would be more helpful than a hundred thousand soldiers.

Why then should there have been infelicity between these two great Americans I ask again? It is inadequate to a fitting characterization of that infelicity simply to declare it to have been unfortunate. It was more than unfortunate. It was wrong, radically, avoidably, culpably wrong, and Abraham Lincoln was not the perpetrator but the innocent victim of that wrong. This is my unequivocal and unqualified testimony after the lapse of more than half a century, and this

testimony is based upon a thorough familiarity with all the facts and events connected with the matter.

There is given to us an early disclosure of the inner nature of these two great Americans. In 1858 Mr. Greeley, though the editor of the leading republican paper of the nation, failed to give his cordial support to Mr. Lincoln, as republican candidate for the United States senate from Illinois, but preferred the election of Stephen A. Douglas, the author of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. The spirit by which Mr. Greeley was actuated is revealed by the following letter addressed to a journalist very nearly his own equal in ability and in standing:

New York, July 24, 1858.

*My Friend:*

You have taken your own course—don't try to throw the blame on others. You have repelled Douglas, who might have been conciliated and attached to our own side, whatever he may *now* find it necessary to say, or do, and instead of helping us in other states, you have thrown a load upon us that may probably break us down.

You know what was the almost unanimous desire of the republicans of other states; and you spurned and insulted them. Now go ahead and fight it through. You are in for it and it does no good to make up wry faces. What I have said in the *Tribune* since the fight was resolved on, has been in good faith, intended to help you through. If Lincoln would fight up to the work also, you might get through—if he apologizes and retreats, he is lost, and all others go down with him. His first Springfield speech, at the convention, was in the right key; his Chicago speech was bad; and I fear the new Springfield speech is worse. If he dare not stand on broad republican ground, he cannot stand at all. That, however, is *his* business; he is nowise responsible for what I say. I shall stand on the broad antislavery ground, which I have occupied for years. I cannot change it to help your fight; and I should only damage you if I did. You have

got your Elephant—you would have him—now shoulder him! He is not so very heavy after all. As I seem to displease you equally when I try to keep you out of troubles, and when, having rushed in in spite of you, I try to help you in the struggle you have unwisely provoked, I must keep neutral, so far as may be hereafter.

Yours,

(Signed) HORACE GREELEY.

J. Medill, Esq., Chicago, Illinois.<sup>1</sup>

In reading this letter it should be remembered that Mr. Greeley's only provocation for such bitterness of spirit and imperious bearing was in the simple fact that the republicans of Illinois preferred Abraham Lincoln to Stephen A. Douglas as their United States senator.

What a contrast between the spirit revealed by that letter and the heart of Abraham Lincoln as disclosed in the following portions of a letter written by him in the very heat of that terrific struggle with Mr. Douglas:

Springfield, June 1st, 1858.

I have never said nor thought more, as to the inclination of some of our eastern republican friends to favor Douglas, than I expressed in your hearing on the evening of the 21st of April, at the State Library in this place. I have believed—do believe now—that Greeley, for instance, would be rather pleased to see Douglas re-elected over me or any other republican; and yet I do not believe it is so because of any secret arrangement with Douglas; it is because he thinks Douglas's superior position, reputation, experience, and ability, if you please, would more than compensate for his lack of a pure republican position, and therefore his re-election do the general cause of republicanism more good than would the election of any one of our better undistinguished pure republicans. I do not know how you estimate Greeley, but I consider him

<sup>1</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. II., pp. 140-141.

incapable of corruption or falsehood. He denies that he directly is taking part in favor of Douglas, and I believe him. Still his feeling constantly manifests itself in his paper, which, being so extensively read in Illinois is, and will continue to be, a drag upon us.<sup>2</sup>

No other great man known to American history ever has exhibited a spirit so free from resentment as is shown by this letter from Abraham Lincoln.

It is probable that Mr. Greeley's hearty support in 1858 would have resulted in Mr. Lincoln's election at that time to the United States senate. His failure to attain that object of his heart's desire undoubtedly resulted in his subsequent election to the Presidency. But that does not diminish the sense of keen resentment which might be expected to fill his heart because of Mr. Greeley's disaffection at such a time of need, for his highest aspiration at that time was to be chosen to a seat in the senate of the United States. However, every utterance of Mr. Lincoln concerning the matter is in harmony with the letter above quoted. That same spirit characterized all of Mr. Lincoln's dealings and relations with Horace Greeley.

During the struggle which preceded the campaign of 1860 Mr. Greeley's warfare against slavery and its defenders was characterized by great severity. Slavery was a great evil, but the feeling against it was intensified because of the methods by which it was defended and made strong and aggressive. Hence, the antislavery people were not disposed to disapprove of Mr. Greeley's severity when republishing in the *Tribune* an item which appeared in a pro-slavery paper, he added: "Now, if any one knows a better way to answer the one who wrote that item than by a blow over the head with the butt end of a musket, we will stand back and permit him to deal with this scoundrel."

This language of the great antislavery editor was not

<sup>2</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. II., p. 362.

more savage than were editorials which appeared in Southern papers in the denunciation of abolitionists on account of their hostility to slavery. Therefore, the sympathetic readers of the *Tribune* did not recognize in Mr. Greeley's caustic language respecting slavery any disclosure of an imperious or uncharitable nature. Had the above letter to Mr. Joseph Medill, of Chicago, been published during the Lincoln-Douglas campaign of 1858 it would have shown the anti-slavery forces that in dealing with friends and comrades, Mr. Greeley could be quite as severe in judgment, and harsh in language, as when writing of slavery and its propagandists. But to the *Tribune* readers and to the antislavery forces throughout the nation, Mr. Greeley during those years was regarded as the embodiment of unselfish devotion to the interests of humanity, and as distinguished for personal amiability.

His life-story had been most skillfully and attractively told by James Parton, whose literary fame rose many degrees when this biography was given to the world. Parton's story of Mr. Greeley's life won for his hero the admiration of the American people, and contributed very largely to the influence of the *Tribune* in molding public sentiment throughout the free states of the nation.

Mr. Greeley, in the *Tribune*, had successfully championed the cause of struggling humanity. Nailing to its masthead the motto, "Land for the Landless," he aided in larger measure than did any other American in the passage of the "Homestead Law." And his clarion call, "Go west, young man, and grow up with the country," helped as did no other effort in making that Homestead Law effective, by peopling the frontier portions of the nation with a class of enterprising, intelligent, thoroughly American men and women.

Because of the high esteem in which Mr. Greeley was held it was generally believed that his opposition to the nomination of Hon. William H. Seward, in 1860, as the republican candidate for President, was wholly attributable to his

conviction that the great New York senator, though the favorite of the antislavery people, would not be able to poll as large a vote as would a more conservative candidate. I was very industrious in the political activities of those times and very attentive to all manifestations of popular opinions and tendencies. And as far as I could learn there was no manifest public suspicion that Mr. Greeley, in his opposition to Mr. Seward, was in any degree influenced by personal animosity. It was, however, generally understood by the masses that during all of Mr. Seward's official life as governor of New York, and as senator, he was in closest personal fellowship with Horace Greeley; consequently, Mr. Greeley's declaration in the *Tribune* to the effect that the nomination of Mr. Seward would be unwise and probably result in defeat at the polls had great weight with the people. Because of his opposition to Seward, Mr. Greeley himself failed to be elected a delegate from New York to the Chicago convention; but by some means he succeeded in securing a seat in the convention as a delegate from Oregon, and was throughout the convention untiring in his efforts to prevent the nomination of Mr. Seward. His championship of the candidacy of Edward Bates of Missouri was not because of any special preference for Mr. Bates, but because of his conviction that in supporting the Missouri candidate he could most effectively defeat Seward.

Great was the manifestation of delight on the expressive face of Horace Greeley when Seward was defeated. The part taken by Mr. Greeley in this contest caused great bitterness against the *Tribune* and its editor, and gave rise to the insinuation that he was influenced by personal considerations.

I first learned of this charge through Mr. Greeley's indignant demand in the *Tribune* that the letter he was accused of writing Seward should be furnished him for publication in his paper. "Not a copy of the letter, but the original, identical letter which I am accused of writing is demanded. Nothing else will be accepted but the original letter, which, if

received, will be published in full that the readers of the *Tribune* may be afforded the opportunity to judge for themselves respecting the charges that have been made." This was substantially the editorial which I read with interest and amazement. With bated breath the antislavery forces awaited the result. And they had not long to wait, for soon there appeared in the columns of the *Tribune*, the full text of the Greeley letter to Seward, written some two years previous, and starting out with the declaration, as I now remember, that on a designated date "the firm known as Seward, Weed and Greeley would be dissolved by the withdrawal of the junior member of the firm." The date designated in the letter as the one on which the firm would be dissolved was the date upon which Mr. Seward was expected to be re-elected to the senate of the United States, of which he was, at the time, a distinguished member. Thus Mr. Greeley announced his purpose to contribute to the re-election of Mr. Seward, and that after that event his support of Seward would be discontinued. The reasons assigned in this letter for the course Mr. Greeley had decided to pursue were such as to fill the antislavery people throughout the nation with unspeakable regret because of the disclosure alike of the selfish motives by which Mr. Greeley was influenced, and the dictatorial and censorious spirit which he was not supposed to possess.

This reference to the Seward-Greeley episode is here made for the purpose of showing the infelicitous spirit by which Mr. Greeley was dominated. The same spirit, with even more objectionable features, was exhibited in all his relations with President Lincoln. This began immediately after Mr. Lincoln's nomination at Chicago. During the campaign which resulted in his nomination there was great strife and more or less of bitterness. The delegates to that convention were confident of the election of the candidate whom they should name, if their choice proved to be fortunate. There was, therefore, a great prize for which the contending forces were struggling. But, when, upon the third ballot, Mr. Lincoln

received an overwhelming majority and was finally declared the nominee by a unanimous vote, all strife and contention instantly ceased, and all joined in words of congratulation and encouragement.

But Horace Greeley could not keep step with his comrades in this movement for harmony, notwithstanding the fact that he announced in the *Tribune* his acceptance of the result of the convention, and his purpose to labor for the success of the ticket which had been nominated. In an editorial making the above statement he said of the nominee for President: "While others are snowing him white with letters of congratulation, I must express my conviction that the nomination of Edward Bates would have been more fortunate." There was probably then living no other great public man who would have inserted that needless sting into that assurance of support. But Mr. Lincoln had not been his first choice and, therefore, he could not refrain from the above statement, which could have no other possible influence than to weaken the whole movement for the triumph of the republican cause.

It is no disparagement of the faithfulness and efficiency of others to regard Mr. Greeley as by far the largest contributor to the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860. The *Tribune*, of which he was the editor and the dominating spirit, had a nation-wide circulation, and in all the Northern states it was the most potent influence in favor of the republican party. And through this medium, and otherwise, Mr. Greeley wrought with all his heart and soul for republican success. After the above disparaging missive not one discordant note was sounded by the *Tribune*, or its editor, until in November it bore to its readers the welcome tidings of triumph at the polls.

But when the victory was won the master-spirit of the movement, Horace Greeley, seemed immediately to become a victim of the complex and conflicting influences of his own eccentric nature. Even while the joyful shouts of victory

were ringing in his ears and his own praises were being sung by the glad multitudes, Mr. Greeley seemed to lose all the courage which had characterized his heroic struggles for human rights and welfare, and to be eager to surrender the fruit of triumph it had cost so dearly to achieve. Only three days after Mr. Lincoln's election Greeley published an editorial in the *Tribune* in which he said: "If the Cotton States shall become satisfied that they can do better out of the Union than in it, we insist on letting them go in peace. . . . The right to secede may be a revolutionary one, but it exists, nevertheless. We must ever resist the right of any State to remain in the Union and nullify or defy the laws thereof. To withdraw from the Union is quite another matter, and whenever a considerable section of our Union shall deliberately resolve to get out we shall resist all coercive measures designed to keep it in. We hope never to live in a republic whereof one section is pinned to another by bayonets."<sup>3</sup>

As early as November 30th, 1860, less than a month after the Presidential election, Mr. Greeley, in the columns of his widely circulated and very influential paper, said: "Webster and Marshall and Story have reasoned well; the Federal flag represents the government, not a mere league; we are in many respects one union from the St. John to the Rio Grande; but the genius of our institutions is essentially republican and averse to the employment of military force to fasten one section of our federacy to the other. If eight states, having five millions of people choose to separate from us, they cannot be permanently withheld from so doing by Federal cannon."

These declarations of Mr. Greeley were in response to the mutterings of dissatisfaction and threats of rebellion in the South, and were adapted to encourage the belief that secession could be secured without resistance from the national government. And while Mr. Greeley was thus encouraging the spirit of disloyalty by voluntarily offering to give away all the fruits of victory, Mr. Lincoln, the President-elect, though not

<sup>3</sup> A. K. McClure, *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, p. 291.

yet possessing any official authority, on the 11th of December, 1860, sent a letter to William Kellogg, in which he said: "Entertain no proposition for a compromise in regard to the extension of slavery. The instant you do they have us under again; all our labor is lost, and sooner or later must be done over. Douglas is sure to be again trying to bring in his 'Popular Sovereignty.' Have none of it. The tug has to come, and better now than later. You know I think the fugitive slave clause of the Constitution ought to be enforced—to put it in its mildest form, ought not to be resisted." <sup>4</sup>

And again, two days later, on the 13th of December, 1860, Mr. Lincoln in a letter to Hon. E. B. Washburne of Illinois, said: "Prevent as far as possible any of our friends from demoralizing themselves and their cause by entertaining propositions for compromise of any sort on slavery extension. There is no possible compromise upon it but what puts us under again, and all our work to do over again. Whether it be a Missouri line or Eli Thayer's popular sovereignty, it is all the same. Let either be done, and immediately filibustering and extending slavery recommences. On that point hold firm as a chain of steel." <sup>5</sup>

Four days after Mr. Lincoln sent this earnest plea to Mr. Washburne, and just after the secession of South Carolina, Mr. Greeley in a leading editorial of the *Tribune*, in December, 1860, in speaking of the Declaration of Independence, said: "If it justified the secession from the British Empire of three million of colonists in 1776, we do not see why it would not justify the secession of five million of Southerners from the Federal Union in 1861. . . . If seven or eight contiguous states should present themselves at Washington, saying: 'We hate the Federal Union: we have withdrawn from it; we give you the choice between acquiescing in our secession and arranging amicably all incidental questions on the one hand, and attempting to subdue us on the other,' we

<sup>4</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

would not stand up for coercion, for subjugation, for we do not think it would be just. We hold to the right of self-government even when invoked in behalf of those who deny it to others."

At no time in his life did Mr. Lincoln appear so wise and far-seeing, or so resourceful, as during that memorable period of four months between his election in November, 1860, and his inauguration on March 4th, 1861. All the resources of the national government were being employed to strengthen the disloyal element in the South which was threatening rebellion. While President Buchanan was not consenting to the acts of some of the members of his Cabinet, he was too weak and timid to exercise any influence in preventing them, or in safeguarding the interests of the nation.

Far away in his Springfield home, Mr. Lincoln could see the storm gathering to wreck the ship of state with no authority or power to control the hostile influences. And to make more difficult his task, the President-elect was constantly besieged by letters, newspaper articles and personal interviews to take some action with a view of averting civil war. To do so would in his judgment be unwise and harmful. It was claimed by some that a statement of his purposes would allay the apprehensions of the South and prevent war. But Mr. Lincoln knew that he repeatedly had declared his purposes with greatest possible fullness and clearness, and that any additional declaration at that crisis period would be regarded as an exhibition of timidity and would encourage rather than prevent the disloyal activities in the South. Many of the ablest men of the nation were engaged in what was designated as the peace movements, all of which were in the interest of secession.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Four years later, in his second inaugural, Mr. Lincoln referring to these conditions said: "While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union and divide the efforts by negotiation." *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. XI., pp. 44-45.

At this time of unspeakable peril, and of great perplexity, Mr. Lincoln's efforts to save the nation were being hindered and made ineffective by the damaging vagaries about peaceable secession in which Mr. Greeley, in the *Tribune*, was constantly indulging. So harmful had these missives of Mr. Greeley become that Mr. Lincoln sent him a confidential word of caution which caused Mr. Greeley to express his opinion that "a state could no more secede at pleasure from the Union than a stave could secede from a cask." But so distorted was Mr. Greeley's mental vision, that after this very forceful declaration he said: "If eight or ten contiguous states sought to leave, he should say, 'there's the door—go!' But, if the seceding state or states go to fighting and defying the laws, the Union being yet undissolved save by their own say-so, I guess they will have to be made to behave themselves. . . . I fear nothing, care for nothing, but another disgraceful backdown of the free states. That is the only real danger. Let the Union slide—it may be reconstructed; let Presidents be assassinated, we can elect more; let the republicans be defeated and crushed, we shall rise again. But another nasty compromise, whereby everything is conceded and nothing secured, will so thoroughly disgrace and humiliate us that we can never again raise our heads, and this country becomes a second edition of the Barbary States, as they were sixty years ago. Take any form but that.'"<sup>7</sup>

This declaration of Mr. Greeley was in a private letter to Mr. Lincoln, dated December 22nd, 1860. Fortunately for the Union cause it was not published at the time, but it was to Mr. Lincoln a disclosure of the influences against which he would be compelled to contend in his efforts to save the Union.

Several weeks after this interchange of messages between Horace Greeley and the President-elect Mr. Lincoln wrote his prospective Secretary of State, Hon. Wm. H. Seward, on February 1st, 1861, as follows: "I am for no compromise which assists or permits the extension of the institution on soil

<sup>7</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Abraham Lincoln, A History, Vol. III., p. 258.

owned by the nation. And any trick by which the nation is to acquire territory, and then allow some local authority to spread slavery over it, is as obnoxious as any other. I take it that to effect some such result as this, and to put us again on the high road to a slave empire, is the object of all these proposed compromises. I am against it.”<sup>8</sup>

Col. A. K. McClure, who was probably as close to President Lincoln as was any man not in official life, with the exception of Noah Brooks, in his excellent work, “Lincoln and Men of War Times,” pp. 291-292, says of Mr. Greeley: “Less than two weeks before the inauguration of Lincoln, on the 23rd of February, 1861, and the same day on which his paper announced Lincoln’s midnight journey from Harrisburg to Washington, Greeley said in a leading editorial: ‘We have repeatedly said, and we once more insist, that the great principle embodied by Jefferson in the Declaration of American Independence, that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, is sound and just, and that if the slave states, the Cotton States, or the Gulf states only choose to form an independent nation, they have a clear moral right to do so. Whenever it shall be clear that the great body of Southern people have become conclusively alienated from the Union and anxious to escape from it, we will do our best to forward their views.’ ”

On pages 294-295 of the same work, Colonel McClure further says of Mr. Greeley: “He was never without some disturbing issue with Lincoln and the policy of the administration. . . . He fretted Lincoln more than any other one man in the United States, because he had greater ability and greater power than any whose criticisms could reach either Lincoln or the public.”

Mr. Greeley continued his harmful championship of peaceable separation in preference to what was termed “coercion” until the Confederate guns were opened upon Fort Sumter. The roar of the artillery seems to have awakened and aroused

<sup>8</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VI., p. 102.

the old-time spirit of heroism by which Mr. Greeley had been actuated during the years of his warfare against slavery. According to his statement above quoted that the seceders "must be made to behave themselves," Mr. Greeley immediately, when the flag was fired upon, declared in favor of the most vigorous prosecution of the war. "The Nation's War Cry," was the caption of a *Tribune* editorial, printed in bold capitals and kept as standing matter in that paper. In that editorial Mr. Greeley said: "Forward to Richmond! Forward to Richmond! The Rebel Congress must not be allowed to meet there on the 20th of July. By that date the place must be held by the national army!"

The loyal people throughout the nation were thrilled by the daily declarations of the *Tribune* in favor of heroic action. So effective were these appeals of Mr. Greeley in the *Tribune* that public sentiment soon arose to fever-heat and the people clamored for opportunities to resist, by force of arms, those who were seeking the overthrow of the government.

When the Confederate forces were being marshalled at points adjacent to the national Capital, Mr. Lincoln called a council of his Cabinet with General Scott, who at that time was in command of the Union forces. In this council General Scott stated that the government was not in condition to make a successful advance upon the enemy, and earnestly recommended that no efforts in that direction be undertaken until the coming autumn. To this proposition Mr. Lincoln and each member of his Cabinet promptly replied that "the condition of public sentiment would not permit such a delay." That condition of public sentiment was very largely the product of the *Tribune's* impatient, and at times denunciatory insistence upon an immediate advance. Under this compulsion of public sentiment thus inflamed, the advance upon Manassas was undertaken and the disastrous battle of Bull Run was the result. Those were gloomy days for the loyal people of this nation. Better a thousand times that Mr. Lincoln should have been left to make the full and perfect prep-

aration which he deemed necessary before proceeding against an enemy so thoroughly equipped and prepared for action. But the well-meant clamor of the people, led by the *Tribune*, compelled that premature advance with its deplorable results.

It is amusing to remember the *Tribune's* instant change of front. No longer did its columns teem with passionate demands for immediate advance upon the enemy. I can recall, as vividly as if it occurred yesterday, the subdued and softened tones of the *Tribune*, which followed the disastrous Bull Run battle. Mr. Greeley assured his readers that it was not his purpose to interfere to any degree, or in any manner, with the action of the general government. Those in authority, he declared, were better informed than were others concerning conditions and should be left without interference by the people, to decide when and where and how to make an attack against the enemy.

That was wise counsel, but, unfortunately, it was late in being given. And then followed other disasters, and while the President, with sleepless, tireless energy, was seeking to save the nation; and while the people throughout the loyal states were kneeling before God in earnest supplications for the great and good Chieftain who, at this hour of grief and danger, sorely needed words of counsel and encouragement, Horace Greeley from his citadel in New York, hurled into the White House and into the heart of the President, the following cruel javelins:

New York, Monday, July 29, 1861. Midnight.

*Dear Sir:*

This is my seventh sleepless night—yours, too, doubtless—yet I think I shall not die, because I have no right to die. I must struggle to live, however bitterly. But to business. You are not considered a great man, and I am a hopelessly broken one. You are now undergoing a terrible ordeal, and God has thrown the gravest responsibilities upon you. Do not fear to meet them. . . . If the Union is irrevocably gone, an ar-

mistice for thirty, sixty, ninety, one hundred and twenty days—better still a year—ought at once to be proposed, with a view to a peaceful adjustment. Then Congress should call a national convention, to meet at the earliest possible day. And there should be an immediate and mutual exchange or release of prisoners and a disbandment of forces. I do not consider myself at present a judge of anything but the public sentiment. That seems to be everywhere gathering and deepening against a prosecution of the war. The gloom in this city is funereal—for our dead at Bull Run were many, and they lie unburied yet. On every brow sits sullen, scorching, black despair.

If it is best for the country and mankind that we make peace with the rebels at once and on their own terms, do not shrink even from that. But bear in mind the greatest truth: "Whoso would lose his life for my sake shall save it." Do the thing that is the highest right, and tell me how I am to second you.

Yours, in the depth of bitterness,

HORACE GREELEY.<sup>9</sup>

This harsh and heartless criticism of President Lincoln and of the Government at Washington, for the disastrous defeats which had occurred, caused Mr. Lincoln unspeakable pain, but did not awaken in his heart any feeling of resentment. It was the more inexcusable because it was well known to Mr. Greeley, that previous to Mr. Lincoln's inauguration, the administration of the Government had been so conducted by officials in full sympathy with the South as to cause him to be destitute of men or money with which to carry on the war against men who, according to their own declaration, had been preparing for the struggle "for more than thirty years." Therefore, the deplorable disasters which Mr. Greeley mentioned in this tirade against the Government should have awakened in every loyal heart deepest sympathy

<sup>9</sup> Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, Vol. IV., pp. 365-366.

with those who at such great disadvantage were seeking to save the nation from disaster. But Mr. Greeley was so constituted that he could only see that victory on the field of battle for the Union cause was desirable, and because it was desirable it must be attained, or upon the authorities of the nation his unqualified and crushing condemnation would fall.

In November, 1861, Mr. James R. Gilmore, a young, enterprising and brilliant literary gentleman with ample means, who is mentioned on other pages of this volume, visited Horace Greeley at the request of the Hon. Robert J. Walker, for the purpose of enlisting the *Tribune* editor in a movement for the publication of a magazine devoted wholly to the advocacy of emancipation. Mr. Greeley's interest was at once awakened by Mr. Gilmore's statement that Governor Walker was associated with him in the magazine enterprise. "Robert J. Walker!" said Mr. Greeley in surprise. "He is the greatest man we have had since Benjamin Franklin." It is probable that in this statement Mr. Greeley did not overestimate the great son of Pennsylvania, who, as senator from Mississippi, aided Andrew Jackson to crush nullification, and as Governor of Kansas, had performed even a greater service to the nation.

During this interview Mr. Greeley incidentally remarked that "everything was going to the devil," and when Mr. Gilmore asked for an explanation of his meaning, he declared:

"For half a year we have had one continued succession of disasters—Big Bethel, Bull Run, Wilson's Creek, and now Ball's Bluff, and the loss of Baker—with nothing to offset but a few insignificant victories in West Virginia—and all owing to the supineness and stupidity of the people at Washington. Six months! and we worse off than when we began! Why, six weeks of such a man as Jackson would have stamped the whole thing out; and now it must go on till both sections are ruined, and all because we have no sense or energy in the Government. It pains, it grieves me to think of it; for I feel in a measure responsible for it. For

you know it is said that but for my action in the convention, Lincoln would not have been nominated. It was a mistake, the biggest mistake of my life."

The reader will observe that in these statements Mr. Greeley not only speaks with harsh severity with reference to the disasters which had befallen the nation, but in so doing he piles merciless maledictions upon those who were charged with the duty of conducting the Government. It is probable that there was not in any government of earth at that time a company of more able, experienced statesmen than were those constituting Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet. That he might be surrounded by men of highest type, he astonished the world by choosing as his constitutional advisers the men who had been his chief rivals for his nomination. It is not probable that any other man who ever occupied the Presidential office would have dared to bring so large a company of able and experienced rivals into his official family. And Mr. Greeley's designation of these men, as above stated, is an illustration of his hasty and severe judgment respecting those who did not in all respects conform to his wishes.

And following this disloyal diatribe, and at the same interview, Mr. Greeley expressed to Mr. Gilmore his earnest wish to enter into a close alliance with President Lincoln by which he would receive for publication in the *Tribune*, advance information respecting the policies and proposed action of the Government. In return for this he engaged to give the President, and his administration, such cordial and constant support as would be rendered by an administration organ.

If it were not a matter of undisputable record it would be difficult to believe that after the letters he had sent to the President, as above stated, and immediately following his harangue of denunciation, Mr. Greeley could have made such a proposition. But more wonderful than this proposition of Mr. Greeley was the fact that when, a few days later, the matter was mentioned to Mr. Lincoln by Governor Walker and Mr. Gilmore, the President greeted the suggestion with

seeming delight and approval. Remembering all the infelicitities through which he had passed, and especially the cruel and discouraging messages he had received from the *Tribune* editor, it seems incredible that a chief magistrate so extremely cautious and reticent as Mr. Lincoln was known to be could have entertained such a proposition for a moment. But Mr. Lincoln was so utterly void of any spirit of resentment or retaliation, so large-hearted and charitable in his estimates of his associates in the Union movement, and so unutterably anxious to secure the hearty co-operation of Mr. Greeley and the *Tribune* in the great struggle he was in, that he immediately prepared the following letter to Governor Walker:

Washington, Nov. 21, 1861.

*Dear Governor:*

I have thought over the interview which Mr. Gilmore has had with Mr. Greeley, and the proposal that Greeley has made to Gilmore, namely, that he (Gilmore) should communicate to him (Greeley) all that he learns from you of the inner workings of the administration, in return for his (Greeley's) giving such aid as he can to the new magazine, and allowing you (Walker) from time to time the use of his (Greeley's) columns when it is desirable to feel of, or forestall, public opinion on important subjects. The arrangement meets my unqualified approval, and I shall further it to the extent of my ability, by opening to you—as I do now—fully the policy of the Government—its present views and future intentions when formed—giving you permission to communicate them to Gilmore for Greeley; and in case you go to Europe I will give these things direct to Gilmore. But all this must be on the express and explicit understanding that the fact of these communications coming from me shall be absolutely confidential—not to be disclosed by Greeley to his nearest friend, or any of his subordinates. He will be, in effect, my mouthpiece, but I shall not be known to be the speaker.

I need not tell you that I have the highest confidence in Mr. Greeley. He is a great power. Having him firmly behind me will be as helpful to me as an army of one hundred thousand men. That he has ever kicked the traces has been owing to his not being fully informed. Tell Gilmore to say to him that, if he ever objects to my policy, I shall be glad to have him state to me his views frankly and fully. I shall adopt his if I can. If I cannot, I shall at least tell him why. He and I should stand together, and let no minor differences come between us; for we both seek one end, which is the saving of our country. Now, Governor, this is a longer letter than I have written in a month—longer than I would have written for any other man than Horace Greeley.

Your friend, truly,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

P. S.—The sooner Gilmore sees Greeley the better, as you may before long think it wise to ventilate our policy on the Trent affair.<sup>10</sup>

The reader scarcely need be requested to note the unqualified approval which Mr. Lincoln gives to this Greeley proposition, and his statement, "I shall further it to the extent of my ability."

The existence of the above letter is so little known, and its contents are of such measureless importance, that I not only publish the same in full, but most earnestly request that those who peruse these pages give it, in its entirety, careful consideration. It should not be overlooked nor forgotten, that the subject matter to which this communication refers was "the proposal that Greeley has made to Gilmore." In the fertile brain of the great journalist the proposition which is here set forth had its origin. The proposition was a bold and very remarkable effort of Mr. Greeley to secure for his paper such favors from the administration as are bestowed only upon publications which are known to represent the administration.

<sup>10</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. XI., pp. 121-122.

Those were momentous days when careful efforts were being made to form an alliance between President Lincoln and Horace Greeley. The two principals in the proposed alliance did not meet during the period in which the affiliation was being considered. All the necessary arrangements were made between the President and Mr. Greeley through the agency of Governor Robert J. Walker and James R. Gilmore. The two men who were negotiating for the formation of that alliance were the most potential personalities in the nation. The President by virtue of his great office and his transcendent gifts of leadership was pre-eminently the foremost personality of the world. Horace Greeley, by whose suggestion the forming of that alliance was undertaken, was at that time the peerless journalist of the nation.

There is no evidence that the proposed alliance between President Lincoln and Horace Greeley, though solicited by the latter and favored by the former, ever was so fully consummated as to exert any restraining influence upon the *Tribune* or its editor. When Mr. Gilmore presented the above letter of the President to Governor Walker to Mr. Greeley, he carefully read and reread it, "his face beaming with simple joyousness." He then said: "He (Mr. Lincoln) is a wonderful man—wonderful! I never can harbor a thought against him except when I keep away from him. You must let me keep this letter." When Mr. Gilmore hesitated to grant this request, Mr. Greeley said: "It shall not be seen. I want it just to look at when I am downhearted. The approval of such a man is worth having." Yet Mr. Greeley's criticisms and complaints continued, and were quite as unreasonable, unkind and harmful as they had been. There can be no estimate of the advantage to the country if the proposed alliance could have been formed and made effective. It certainly would have added immensely to the influence of the *Tribune* throughout the nation to have had information respecting the policy and operations of the government in advance of other papers, and

would have caused the great republican daily to become recognized as an administration organ, and would have built it up into far greater strength and influence than it ever attained.

And to have had that great paper standing boldly and unwaveringly for the measures which the President sought to make effective would so have added to the strength and effectiveness of the government as to justify Mr. Lincoln's declaration in his letter to Governor Walker that Mr. Greeley's cordial and constant support would be more helpful than an army of a hundred thousand men.

In looking back upon these pregnant events I am thrilled with religious patriotism when I consider the possibilities of the carrying out of the purposes for which the alliance between the *Tribune* and the national administration was undertaken. I drank daily and copiously from the waters which flowed from the seemingly exhaustless fountain in the *Tribune* building in New York City. I mingled continuously with the people whose thirst was slaked by the same refreshing waters. I heard the name of Horace Greeley in conversation and upon the platform almost as frequently as the name of Abraham Lincoln. I have not forgotten that we accepted as our own the opinions advocated by Greeley, often without hesitation. His statements were never called in question and his public suspicions respecting the motives of men in public life, and the probable results of proposed measures and movements influenced the judgment of the people almost like a divine edict. And I realized then, as I do more fully while I write these words, that the troubled waters of public sentiment during those fitful seasons of excitement and depression, could have been calmed by a little of the oil of loyal counsel in the columns of the *Tribune*. My eyes are misty, and my heart throbs with more than patriotic sorrow as I meditate upon the possibilities of the faithful carrying out of the covenant between the *Tribune* and the national administration. All who are familiar with the story of the Rebellion know that there were times, how many times need not be

designated, when prompt and courageous action by the Union forces would have brought the war to a speedy close. Instead of such action there was seeming timidity and delay. With tear-dimmed eyes we read the story of those golden opportunities which came and went with the exigencies of war. But no such failure in the field resulted in such serious loss to the Union cause as did the failure of the proposed covenant of co-operation between President Lincoln and Horace Greeley. There were times when the hostility of Mr. Greeley and the *Tribune* to President Lincoln and his policies reached a crisis. Such a point was reached when in the Spring of 1862 the President courteously but earnestly invited Mr. Greeley to an interview in the White House and in a manner which at times of great emergency he assumed said to Mr. Greeley: "What have I done or omitted to do which has provoked the hostility of the *Tribune*?" To this pointed and significant question of Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Greeley replied by declaring that the President ought to issue a Proclamation of Emancipation. To this Mr. Lincoln replied: "There are twenty thousand muskets on the shoulders of Kentuckians who are bravely fighting our battles. Every one of them will be thrown down or carried over to the Rebels if I should issue such a proclamation."

"Let them go!" angrily replied Mr. Greeley, "the cause of the Union will be stronger if Kentucky should secede." To this Mr. Lincoln calmly replied: "Oh, I cannot think that."

Was there ever a more impressive exhibition of the calm dignity and great strength which should characterize a great ruler than this answer of Abraham Lincoln to the petulant, irrational declaration of Horace Greeley?

Again and again I have read the account of this interview and have meditated upon its significance, and at each perusal it reveals, with greater distinctness, the dominant characteristics of these two great men. In the light of history, Mr. Greeley's declarations are like the utterances of a madman, while the words of Lincoln are as the voice of a sage.

Another crisis was reached when on the 19th of August, 1862, Mr. Greeley published in the *Tribune*, an editorial which he had the assurance to designate as "The Prayer of Twenty Million." It was an "Open Letter" to the President, and to this day I have a vivid recollection of the tremendous impression which that editorial made throughout the country. It was a haughty, dictatorial demand that the President should conduct the administration of the government according to Mr. Greeley's interpretation of his duties. The following is a portion of that editorial:

"On the face of this wide earth, Mr. President, there is not one disinterested, determined, intelligent champion of the Union cause who does not feel that all attempts to put down the Rebellion and at the same time uphold its inciting cause, are preposterous and futile—that the Rebellion, if crushed out tomorrow, would be renewed within a year if slavery were left in full vigor—that army officers, who remain to this day devoted to slavery, can at best be but halfway loyal to the Union—and that every hour of deference to slavery is an hour of added and deepened peril to the Union. I appeal to the testimony of your Ambassadors in Europe. It is freely at your service, not mine. Ask them to tell you candidly whether the seeming subserviency of your policy to the slaveholding, slavery-upholding interest, is not the perplexity, the despair of statesmen of all parties; and be admonished by the general answer."<sup>11</sup>

This editorial came at a time of critical conditions, and with nervous anxiety we awaited the action of the President in the matter. Many expected the strong hand of the government to be laid upon the great daily and that its editor would be called to an account for his interference with the administration at a time of great peril. But if an angel from heaven had come into our midst, bearing a message from

<sup>11</sup> Horace Greeley, *The American Conflict*, pp. 249-250.

the throne of God, it could not have produced a more profound impression than did the following reply of President Lincoln to the caustic criticisms of Mr. Greeley:

Executive Mansion, Washington, August 22, 1862.

*Dear Sir:*

I have just read yours of the 19th addressed to myself through the New York *Tribune*. If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do more whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to

correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views as fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

Yours,

A. LINCOLN.<sup>12</sup>

The above "Open Letter" to Mr. Greeley was first published on the 23rd of August, 1862, in the *National Intelligencer* of Washington, D. C., and was at once copied in all the loyal papers of the country. Its immediate results resembled the "great calm which settled like a benediction upon tempestuous Galilee when a Voice divine rebuked the wind and the raging of the water." It was like the passing of the crisis of a burning fever, when speedy restoration to health and vigor suddenly begins. Many times since its first appearance that "Open Letter" has been published and it has come to be regarded as one of the most nearly perfect epistolary productions of human history.

Mr. Greeley attempted to reply but his efforts, though violent, only revealed his utter discomfiture; and in his own estimation his arguments were not of sufficient merit to justify reproduction in his elaborate history of "The American Conflict." But until the hour of Mr. Lincoln's tragic death Mr. Greeley seems neither to have forgiven nor forgotten that "Open Letter" which made August 22nd, 1862, an epoch in our nation's history. He continued his petulant criticisms but, peerless journalist as he believed himself to be, he never again ventured into the field of epistolary controversy with Abraham Lincoln.

It is interesting to remember that when President Lincoln wrote that letter to Horace Greeley he already had prepared the Emancipation Proclamation, and was anxiously

<sup>12</sup> Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. VIII., p. 15.

waiting for more favorable military results before giving it publicity. That Proclamation had been discussed at length by the Cabinet and was lying in the drawer of the desk on which Mr. Lincoln wrote that Greeley letter. Just one month to the day from the date of that letter President Lincoln issued his preliminary Proclamation of Emancipation, which on the first day of the next January was followed by the final Proclamation.

The opportunity of his life—such an opportunity as very few men ever have had—came to Horace Greeley when the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Lincoln. Next to the President, Mr. Greeley was more responsible than any other person for that monumental edict of freedom. Because of his transcendent ability, his great influence with the people, and the immense circulation of the *Tribune* of which he was editor, Mr. Greeley had been the largest contributor to the creation of the public sentiment which made possible the election of Mr. Lincoln as President, and in due time caused him to issue that Proclamation.

Being a lifelong abolitionist, and of very ardent temperament, Mr. Greeley from the beginning of the war insisted upon the destruction of slavery not only upon moral grounds but as a means of military success. His demand for an Emancipation Proclamation was urged with ceaseless energy and at times in a dictatorial and imperious spirit. It was, therefore, peculiarly fitting that when that Proclamation for which Mr. Greeley had so long and so persistently pleaded was given to the world, he should be found among the most enthusiastic in supporting that important measure and in commending its author.

Furthermore, Mr. Greeley was under especial obligations to rally to the support of that Proclamation and of the President and his administration because of the hostility which the Proclamation had aroused throughout the loyal states. A general election of members of Congress was soon to be held in all the loyal states, and it was a matter of supreme importance

to have a verdict from the people in support of the antislavery policy adopted by the administration. The pro-slavery element in the loyal states was by the Proclamation aroused to frenzied assaults upon Mr. Lincoln, and were aided in their warfare by the Union people whose ardor was cooled by the adoption of the Emancipation policy. Postmaster General Montgomery Blair, when the Emancipation Proclamation was under consideration in the Cabinet, very emphatically and with unquestioning confidence assured the President that its adoption would cost him an adverse verdict of the people at the polls in November. Mr. Lincoln was also seriously apprehensive that such might be the case; yet, in obedience to an imperious sense of duty, he decided to incur the risk and trust to the loyal antislavery people to secure for the measure popular endorsement.

This condition gave Mr. Greeley the great opportunity to which, unfortunately, his measurements were not adequate. He gave the Emancipation Proclamation his enthusiastic support and he manifested a degree of interest in the election of members of Congress who favored emancipation, but his chief interest seemed to be in the Presidential election to be held two years later, at which time he was determined to prevent the re-election of President Lincoln. To accomplish that result he was searching the entire country to find a candidate for whom he could hope to win the nomination by the national convention of the Union party. During all the summer and autumn of 1862 I was in the thick of the fight to secure for the President, and for his administration, such an endorsement by the people at the polls as would aid in the struggle for the preservation of the nation. Well do I remember how the Emancipation Proclamation intensified that struggle by arousing to greater efforts both of the contending forces. Nor can I forget how seriously the Union party was weakened in that struggle by Mr. Greeley's persistent hostility to the President and his administration. And half a century of diversified experiences has not made less vivid my realiza-

tion of the depressing gloom that darkened all the land when the verdict at the polls, at the Congressional election in 1862, was found to be unfavorable to the administration.

But in that darkness a guiding star appeared as the people came to realize that the cause of emancipation was bound up in a bundle of life with the great Emancipator, and that his re-election was essential to the success of the edict against slavery and the preservation of the Union. However, while the masses were thus gathering to the standard of President Lincoln, Horace Greeley was industriously prosecuting his quest for a candidate to compete with Mr. Lincoln for the Presidential nomination.

At the dawning of the New Year, 1863, millions of slaves throughout the country arose and shook off the galling fetters with which they had been bound, and with melting melody that defied all efforts at imitation, mingled in song the name of their Divine Deliverer and, to them, the equally sacred and cherished name of Abraham Lincoln. The Emancipation Proclamation was effective with the slaves and it wrought like leaven among the loyal masses of the nation, but it failed to soften the heart of Horace Greeley, and to cause him to feel more kindly towards its author.

In May, 1863, the first year of freedom, Mr. Greeley sent Mr. James R. Gilmore, who had become a member of the *Tribune* editorial staff, to Murfreesboro, Tennessee, for the purpose of inducing General W. E. Rosecrans, then in command of the Army of the Cumberland, to consent to become a candidate for the Presidency. But, although in this he was unsuccessful, he continued to prosecute his warfare against the renomination of Mr. Lincoln, until his opposing voice was smothered by the shouts of approval in the Baltimore convention that registered the verdict of the people in favor of Abraham Lincoln. If Mr. Greeley had been of dimensions equal to his opportunity he would have pursued the consistent course for a great and good man, and would

have gone into history as second to only one, in his achievements for the cause of human freedom.

And after that renomination at Baltimore, at the crisis of that campaign, Mr. Greeley was active with the Wade-Davis faction in conducting a most unreasonable warfare against the President for the wise and proper exercise of his rightful executive authority to veto a measure which he did not approve. And though, during all the Presidential campaign, Mr. Greeley advocated the vigorous prosecution of the war, we were constantly confronted by the claim which during preceding years he so persistently had presented, that peace without dismemberment could be secured by negotiations. It was this claim of the opposition which during those midsummer months of 1864 caused the re-election of Mr. Lincoln to appear to some of his party leaders, and even to himself, as exceedingly improbable. There never had come from the Confederate authorities one utterance to justify the claim that any terms of peace without a dissolution of the Union would be by them for a moment entertained.

Yet, during the Presidential campaign of 1864, those Confederate leaders had, with consummate cunning, kept silent respecting this matter which gave the opposition the opportunity they coveted to claim that the time had come when the Union could be saved by negotiation without further "effusion of blood." And during the preceding years Mr. Greeley had persisted in presenting the same claim, and thus he had contributed to the public sentiment which made difficult and doubtful the triumph of the Union cause at the Presidential election.

It was characteristic of Mr. Greeley's eccentricities that in July, 1864, after Mr. Lincoln's renomination as a candidate for re-election, and before the national convention of the opposition had been held, he became actively interested in what is known as the Conference of Niagara Falls.

Two Confederate leaders, Clay of Alabama and Thompson of Mississippi, had found their way to a point in Canada,

not far from Niagara Falls, and at once opened negotiations with Mr. Greeley. The unsophisticated journalist immediately saw a cloud of doves of peace, each bearing an olive branch, and moving toward our national capital. Inspired by this vision, he sent on July 7th, 1864, a message to the President, in which he said: "I venture to remind you that our bleeding, bankrupt, almost dying country, longs for peace—shudders at the prospect of fresh conscriptions, of further wholesale devastations, and of new rivers of human blood; and a widespread conviction that the Government and its supporters are not anxious for peace and do not improve proffered opportunities to achieve it, is doing great harm and is morally certain, unless removed, to do far greater in the approaching elections. . . ."

"Mr. President, I fear you do not realize how intently the people desire any peace consistent with the national integrity and honor, and how joyously they would hail its achievement and bless its authors. . . . I do not say that a just peace is now attainable, though I believe it to be so."<sup>13</sup>

In this letter Mr. Greeley informs the President of the presence of the two above-named Confederate officers at Niagara Falls and intimates that they are authorized by the Confederate Government to offer terms of peace. He further asks on behalf of those alleged commissioners the President's safe conduct that they may visit Washington and confer with him.

But Abraham Lincoln was not to be caught in the trap thus skillfully set and baited by the Confederate emissaries and their unsophisticated associate—Horace Greeley. He understood far better than Mr. Greeley the mission of those Confederate commissioners at Niagara Falls. Therefore, with characteristic sagacity Mr. Lincoln on the 9th of July, 1864, replied to this letter from Mr. Greeley as follows: "If you can find any person anywhere professing to have authority from Jefferson Davis, in writing, embracing the restoration of

<sup>13</sup> Nicolay and Hay, Vol. IX., pp. 186-187.

the Union and the abandonment of slavery, whatever else it embraces, say to him that he may come to me with you."

This would have led to movements that would have resulted in peace but for the vital defect—the Confederate leaders were not seeking peace except upon the condition of Southern Independence. Therefore, those two Confederate leaders when confronted by Mr. Lincoln's proposition communicated to them by Horace Greeley were compelled to admit that they had no official authority to negotiate for peace.

In a private letter dated July 25th, 1864, and addressed to Mr. Abram Wakeman, postmaster of New York City, Mr. Lincoln said: "The men of the South recently (and probably still) at Niagara Falls tell us distinctly that they *are* in the confidential employment of the Rebellion, and they tell us as distinctly that they are *not* empowered to offer terms of peace. Does any one doubt that what they are empowered to do is to assist in selecting and arranging a candidate and a platform for the Chicago convention?"

This letter shows that Mr. Lincoln fully understood the purposes for which the Confederate commissioners were at Niagara Falls and that the peace proposition which Mr. Greeley so zealously espoused was but another one of the many skillfully constructed schemes by which the Confederate leaders sought to secure from Mr. Lincoln a recognition of the Confederacy which would be embarrassing to him and helpful to them at the capitals of foreign nations. Occurring as it did during the dark and dismal days of the Presidential campaign of 1864 it would have been inestimably harmful to the Union cause but for the skill and promptness with which it was exposed by the President's prompt reply. It is probable that in all the country Horace Greeley was the only great man who, at such a time, could have been led into such an ambush of the enemy.

It is interesting to note that it was just at this time of peculiar need that there came to Mr. Lincoln information which under God was most sustaining and helpful to him, in

his peculiarly difficult work. Direct from the Confederate capital, as I have elsewhere fully explained, Mr. Gilmore had brought to the President the declarations of Jefferson Davis respecting his determination to submit to no terms of peace which did not include the independence of the South. With this knowledge which he knew would soon be communicated to the millions throughout the loyal states, Mr. Lincoln was comforted and sustained, as was Elijah beneath the juniper tree, by the ministration of the celestial messenger.

There is no reasonable explanation of the contradictory characteristics in Mr. Greeley's nature. He was merciless as well as masterful in the use of his facile pen. With a severity that made the heart quiver he piled his maledictions upon the institution of slavery and upon those identified with it. But he seemed to be insensible to the unutterable anguish which his pen inflicted upon the hearts of true, brave, loyal Union men who were not less opposed to slavery than was he, but who differed from him concerning minor features of that question. He could not endure the thought "of the needless effusion of blood," but would deliberately and without compunction, pierce with a thousand pains the hearts of as true and loyal men as ever wore the uniform or carried the seal of office. He seemed utterly indifferent to the pleas that were made for forbearance toward President Lincoln, who, as the world now sees, was guided by infinite wisdom in the course he pursued. Mr. Lincoln's heart was as tender as a loving mother toward even his most malignant enemy, and he deplored the shedding of blood quite as fully as did Horace Greeley, or any other human being.

The life led by Mr. Greeley was singularly adapted to accentuate these qualities. Each denunciation of slavery seemed to fill his heart with a spirit of bitterness and cause him to pour out the vials of his wrath upon the devoted heads of public officials and army officers who failed to win his approbation. He dipped his pen in vitriol when writing against slavery, and by the force of habit, when commenting on the

attitudes and activities of our good President his hand automatically sought the same bottle in which he had found the liquid to his liking when denouncing slavery.

No one will question Mr. Greeley's loyalty to his convictions; but those of us who knew him well will agree that he was constitutionally incompetent to reach right conclusions with reference to practical, abstract propositions relative to which he had strong preferences. Perhaps, to say frankly that Mr. Greeley was defective in judgment would be more readily and generally understood. An artist would possibly say that he was overstocked with perspective but defective in intermediate details. In personal affairs he was, as a rule, wise and discreet. He began with nothing and learned that wealth, strength and influence were attained by increment. But in public affairs he would fix his eye upon some great object which he believed should be attained and when the goal was reached by the patient and persevering efforts of others, he simply knew he was at the point he had sought to reach, and regarded the achievement as the result of his far-seeing wisdom, ability and skill in execution. He would recognize a possible achievement as desirable in governmental affairs and until it was obtained he would accuse the government of tardiness and denounce those in authority without inquiring the cause of delay. With his meager knowledge of conditions he would pronounce emphatic judgment against the acts of others who, unlike himself, were familiar with all the facts connected with the affair.

A striking illustration of these characteristics of Horace Greeley, which the present generation should understand, is found in his attitude to the question of national finances, not only during the years of the rebellion, but also during the troublesome period of reconstruction.

During the rebellion the enormous cost of prosecuting the war was far greater than the amount of hard money (gold and silver) which it was possible for the government to secure. Mr. Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury, Hon. Salmon P.

Chase, found that his predecessor in office had, by skillful manipulation, compelled him to confront the enormous expenses of the war with an empty treasury. Therefore, it became necessary to issue redeemable paper currency for the payment of which, at as early a period as possible, and in hard money, the national government was responsible. This paper money became, throughout the nation, the medium of exchange in the transaction of all private business, and nearly all the business of the national government.

Gold and silver money was automatically withdrawn from circulation, and rose to a high premium as the amount of paper money was increased. It was provided that at as early a date as possible the government would redeem its paper currency with hard money, and with the same medium would meet its own financial obligations. This was designated as "the resumption of specie payment," and to accomplish that result was the greatest problem of the government after the close of the rebellion.

The *Congressional Record* shows that General James A. Garfield, who was at that time a member of Congress from Ohio, a favorite son of the Buckeye state, and was looked upon as the coming man, did not participate to any considerable extent in the discussions and proceedings of Congress respecting reconstruction. Some of us who were deeply interested in the future career of this talented and highly cultured young statesman, remonstrated with him because of his seeming neglect of passing opportunities to attract the attention and win the favor of the nation. To these expressions of friendly solicitude General Garfield replied: "The great question which this war will require the American statesmen to understand is not Reconstruction, but Finance—how to pay the nation's debts and how to resume specie payment; and that is the question I am now studying, and which I hope at the time of need thoroughly to understand."

That answer was not fully satisfactory to us young men, but in due time the financial world and the governments of

earth were astonished by General Garfield's perfect familiarity with the whole financial problem of the nation and his wise leadership in the settlement of that great problem growing out of the war. It was my privilege to sit with enraptured soul and listen to that really marvelous speech by which that strong advocate of protection won for himself a voluntary tender of membership in the Free Trade Cobden Club of London; and I then understood the significance of General Garfield's earlier statements respecting his diligent and tireless investigation of financial problems.

And while General Garfield and other far-seeing American statesmen were thus studying the great financial problem of the nation; while the government was exercising its every power and taxing to the limit all its wisdom and resources to meet the nation's current needs, and at the same time provide for the earliest possible resumption of specie payment, Horace Greeley was very active, not in a diligent study of the financial problem but in publishing imperious demands for the immediate resumption of specie payment. "Resume! Resume!" was his imperative demand, and "the way to resume, is to resume," so constantly appeared in the columns of the *Tribune* that it became a byword throughout the nation, and is, even yet, in a paraphrase form used in jocose demands for reaching the unattainable.

For several hours I sat by Mr. Greeley's side, on a sofa, in the national House of Representatives, and listened to his emphatic statements with reference to governmental questions. It was during the closing months of the war when it required nearly three dollars in paper money to purchase one dollar in gold or silver. During that conversation he vehemently demanded a return to specie payment and said: "I do not believe any man is fit to be Secretary of the Treasury who cannot resume specie payment within thirty days after the war closes."

I listened to that declaration of Mr. Greeley with reference to the resumption of specie payment with unspeakable aston-

ishment. It required no considerable knowledge of the practical affairs of government to make apparent the utter impossibility of the achievement which he so confidently and emphatically declared to be attainable. When those words were spoken by the great New York editor, William Pitt Fessenden, the successor of Salmon P. Chase, had charge of the Treasury portfolio of the government. He was succeeded in that position by Hugh McCullough, a man of transcendent ability and thoroughly familiar with the subject of national finance. And through all the administration of Andrew Johnson, the eight years of General Grant, and a portion of the administration of R. B. Hayes, from 1865 to 1879, fifteen years in all, the government struggled constantly, under the leadership of our greatest financiers, to reach the goal which Mr. Greeley, with vehemence, declared could be attained in thirty days.

The resumption of specie payment was reached during the administration of President Hayes, with that masterful financier and statesman—Hon. John Sherman—as Secretary of the Treasury. And that achievement, fifteen years after the close of the war, caused Mr. Sherman to be regarded as one of the ablest financiers in the world and came very near placing him in the presidential chair. But that magnificent achievement seemed to Mr. Greeley, even when the war was still in progress, as a work to be accomplished in thirty days. He had no patience with those who were engaged in making necessary preparation for resumption. He could not wait for the government to accumulate sufficient gold to make possible the redemption of its paper money.

As in 1861, while the country was without an army that could safely advance against the Confederate forces, Mr. Greeley imperatively demanded an immediate forward movement, so in 1865 he insisted that the government should make even exchange of specie for paper money when there was no specie with which to make that exchange. It was not difficult

for Mr. Lincoln patiently to bear with Mr. Greeley and give his opinions the consideration which was due; but coupled with the defects in Mr. Greeley's intellect was an imperious dominating spirit that caused the President not only serious embarrassment but excruciating pain. He was unwilling to share with others the privilege of conference with the President, but insisted upon being his only counsellor respecting many important matters relative to which he had but limited information. He was like the boy who, while riding horse-back with his brother, with petulance exclaimed: "If one of us would get off there would be more room for me."

Additional light upon the characteristics of Mr. Greeley which caused President Lincoln so much needless embarrassment and suffering is found in the following statement in the autobiography of Dr. Andrew D. White. In writing of Mr. Greeley as a member of the New York Constitutional Convention in 1867, Dr. White says:

"Mr. Greeley was at first all-powerful. . . . For a few days he had everything his own way. But he soon proved to be so erratic a leader that his influence was completely lost, and after a few sessions there was hardly any member with less real power to influence the judgments of his colleagues."

Dr. White tells of Mr. Greeley's imperious, dictatorial bearing toward other members of the convention, and of his profane denunciations of some who voted contrary to his wishes. Not content with his opportunities to complain and grumble in the convention he filled the columns of the *Tribune* with his harmful criticisms until, as Dr. White says, "The convention became thoroughly though unjustly discredited throughout the state and indeed throughout the country." Mr. Greeley finally came to approve the work of the convention and sought by strong editorials in the *Tribune* to secure its adoption by the people, "but it was all in vain. The unfavorable impression had been too widely and too deeply made, and the result was that the new Constitution when submitted to

the people was ignominiously voted down and the whole summer's work of the Convention went for nothing." <sup>14</sup>

The following is Mr. Greeley's own testimony concerning the matters herein referred to: "It is quite probable that, had a popular election been held at any time during the year following the Fourth of July, 1862, on the question of continuing the war or arresting it on the best attainable terms, a majority would have voted for peace; while it is highly probable that a still larger majority would have voted against emancipation. From an early hour of the struggle the public mind slowly and steadily gravitated toward the conclusion that the Rebellion was vulnerable only or mainly through slavery; but that conclusion was scarcely reached by a majority before the occurrence of the New York riots, in July, 1863. The President, though widely reproached with tardiness and reluctance in taking up the gauge plainly thrown down by the Slave Power, was probably ahead of the majority of the people of the loyal states in definitely accepting the issue of Emancipation or Disunion. Having taken a long step in the right direction, he never retracted nor seemed to regret it; though he sometimes observed that the beneficial results of the Emancipation policy were neither so signal nor so promptly realized as its sanguine promoters had anticipated." <sup>15</sup>

It is unfortunate that it required the tragic death of the great and good President, the lapse of time, and the lessons of many years to cause Mr. Greeley to realize the marvelous wisdom and statesmanship of the man to whose lips, while living, he so constantly held the cup of bitterness. It seems a poor atonement for Mr. Greeley's sins of caustic criticism thus to place a wreath upon the martyr's brow. But what more at that late day could he do? The great lesson taught by what I have here recorded is to avoid the evils by which the life of one of our greatest men was so seriously marred.

It is quite certain that the infelicity with which the life

<sup>14</sup> Autobiography of Andrew D. White, Vol. I, pp. 142-146.

<sup>15</sup> Horace Greeley, *The American Conflict*, Vol. II., pp. 254-255.

of President Lincoln was embittered has wrought a great and beneficent reform in our country. When the great heart which those infelicities pierced with poignant pain suddenly ceased to beat, the pages of history became luminous and in that light the great worth of Abraham Lincoln was seen, and the cruelties inflicted upon him sought in vain to hide from the displeasure of humanity. The indignities which marred the pages of the London *Punch* suddenly became vocal with the wail of sorrow which Tom Taylor, in his anguish, gave to the world in plaintive poetry. And in our own land the hearts which were unrelenting while Mr. Lincoln lived, softened to gentleness when he died, and the harsh and rasping voices of criticism mellowed in eulogy and praise. When "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter," the disciple who had thrice denied his Lord "went out and wept bitterly."

And into that same seclusion of sorrowful regret there fled a multitude of the unreasonable and unreasoning fanatics who, prompted by Satanic influences, piled maledictions instead of merited commendation and praise upon the Lord's chosen chieftain of the nation. And from that valley of humiliation, where causeless criticism of the great and good President appeared in all its hideous hatefulness, the nation has ascended to a height of beatific vision of the rights of rulers and the obligations of those who have chosen them to authority.

## VII

### WADE-DAVIS MANIFESTO

**T**HE revolt against President Lincoln which was of all such demonstrations the most painful to him and the most dangerous to the Union cause was what is known in history as "The Wade-Davis Manifesto." The leader in that revolt was Hon. Henry Winter Davis, a member of Congress from Maryland from 1855 to 1861, and from 1863 until his death on December 30th, 1865.

Mr. Davis was an exceptionally strong personality—a man of great intellectual force, of wide range of scholarship, and intensely and unyieldingly purposeful in all his relations to public matters. High spirited and of violent temper, he was imperious in bearing, and being one of the most gifted and accomplished orators in Congress, and a republican from a slave state, he exerted a very great influence in Congress. His aggressive nature swept him along into extremes in opinion and in speech. It would have been unlike Mr. Davis to characterize any man or measure as unwise. That would have been a term too weak to express his haughty disdain of any matter of which he did not heartily approve. The heroic warfare which he waged against slavery and secession was of that extreme denunciatory character which developed and strengthened the distinctive and dominant characteristics of his nature. Therefore, when he had occasion to differ from the President, his opposition was expressed in severe denunciation which unfortunately was carried to such extremes as greatly to annoy Mr. Lincoln and embarrass the administration.

At the period of which I am now writing the status of the states in rebellion had come to be a question of overshadowing importance. Upon that question the party in power was sharply and seriously divided. The radical element claimed that the states which joined in the secession movement and in rebellion had thereby lost their identity as members of the Union; and that they could be restored to their former standing only by processes similar to those by which territories were admitted into the Union as states.

As private secretary of the Hon. James M. Ashley, who was quite prominent and influential at that time, and who was one of the leading advocates of views held by the most radical of the Union party, I became thoroughly familiar with their plan of reconstruction, and with the arguments by which their views were defended. General Ashley, by changing his vote on the Constitutional Amendment abolishing and prohibiting slavery when that measure was defeated in the House, had obtained charge of that amendment, when upon his motion it was for the second time brought before the House, and as mover of the motion made the first speech in the debate which followed.

At his home in Toledo, Ohio, in an extended interview, he conferred with me relative to his views on that subject, and I read with care the manuscript of his speech upon that amendment before it was delivered in the House. Thus, at the beginning of the controversy, I became thoroughly acquainted with the radical programme of reconstruction. Mr. Davis was the leading advocate of that doctrine in the House, and Senator Benjamin F. Wade, of Ohio, was his closest and most zealous associate in that work.

President Lincoln was pronouncedly opposed to this theory of reconstruction, claiming that the war was being conducted as an emphatic declaration that the states had no power to renounce their allegiance to the national government, or to destroy or forfeit their standing in the Union; and that when the rebellion was suppressed, the general government should

by wisely chosen methods restore to the several states their former rights and privileges in the Union.

A man possessing the statesmanlike forecast for which President Lincoln was distinguished, would not fail to realize the importance of taking definite position on the important question of reconstruction as early as would be advisable. Therefore, in his message to Congress, December 8th, 1863, he introduced the subject, stating with very great clearness his views relative to the matter, and presenting arguments of irresistible force in defense of his views on the question. Every member of his Cabinet, with the exception of Mr. Chase, was in favor of the policy which the President in his message indicated as the one which he would pursue. There had been in portions of the speeches of leading members of Congress, and also in some resolutions introduced by them, some indefinite expressions of conviction relative to the status of the states in rebellion. Senator Charles Sumner had, in a resolution, spoken of "State Suicide" in such a way as to indicate that his views on reconstruction were not in harmony with those which subsequently were advocated by the President in the message above referred to.

While the message was being read in the two Houses of Congress it received unusually marked attention. There was a solemn hush when it launched boldly out upon the untried and unknown sea of reconstruction. Some of the great leaders of the radical portion of the Union party leaned forward in their seats and seemed intent upon catching every word which fell from the lips of the reading clerk. This was continued until it became evident that the President would take the more conservative view of the subject, at which point extremists like Mr. Sumner became restless, and some by their manner indicated impatience.

But so definite and clear was the statement of the President's views, and so tremendous was the strength of the arguments by which they were defended, that not even the extremists were able to appear inattentive while that portion of

the message was being read. The influence of the reading of the message in both House and Senate was scarcely less than marvelous. The recognized adherents of the kind and conservative policy of the President listened throughout with marked intensity, and no manifestation of disapproval was anywhere to be seen.

At the close of the reading of the message Mr. Chandler, the big, burly senator from Michigan, was delighted. The deep-toned voice of Mr. Sumner expressed with emphasis his joyous satisfaction. Mr. Dixon and Reverdy Johnson said the message was satisfactory. Henry Wilson, "in the overflowing kindness of his great big heart," requested the President's private secretary "to tell the President that he had struck another great blow, God bless him!" Quite as pronounced was the endorsement received from leading members of the House. Hon. George S. Boutwell, who was regarded as the leader of the extreme antislavery New England sentiment, said of the message: "It is a very able and shrewd paper, and it is all right." Owen Lovejoy, of Illinois, was outspoken and emphatic in his approval of the position taken by the President, and with characteristic religious fervor said he could "see on the mountains the feet of one bringing good tidings." Of like character, and quite as emphatic, were the expressions of approval from General Garfield, Francis W. Kellogg, and H. T. Blow. Even Horace Greeley, who always gave approval of Mr. Lincoln's acts with strange reluctance, being on the floor of the House when the message was read, declared in characteristic language that it was "devilish good." All day long and into the night the Executive Mansion was thronged by delighted members of the Senate and the House, army officers, prominent politicians from every portion of the country, and newspaper men galore, all expressing their unreserved and unqualified approval of the policy announced by the President, and his unanswerable argument in its support.

A still stronger indication of the impression the President's message had made was seen in the changed appearance and

manner of the leading members of the two branches of Congress, and especially of the Union members. It was like the "clearing up" in autumn after dark and threatening clouds had for several days covered the sky, and given evidence of approaching storms. This burst of sunshine lighted up and softened the strong and classic features of the great Massachusetts senator, which, though they did not quite reach the point of wearing a pleasing smile, were without any trace of the determined expression they usually bore. The same light, like the rising sun in Indian summer, glorified the face of Hon. Henry Wilson, Mr. Sumner's colleague in the senate. Most marked of all were the changes in the very thoughtful and strong features of Hon. Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, who was probably the ablest lawyer in the senate. His sloping shoulders were elevated, and he walked with an erectness and springing step which I never noticed in him at any other time.

The coming man of the House, the thorough scholar, the untiring student and able advocate, General James A. Garfield, freely expressed his great satisfaction at the position taken by the President and his admiration of his exceedingly able argument in defense of that position. And so in both branches of the national legislature, there was a spirit of exuberance and settled satisfaction which I saw at no other time during the five years of my connection with the legislative branch of the government. It seemed that the millennium had come and that the anthem, "Peace on earth, good will to men," again was being chanted by the heavenly choir.

But the millennium had not come, and the celestial music soon was smothered by a rumbling sound that seemed to presage a coming conflict. The first tangible indication of antagonism to the reconstruction policy of the administration was in a motion by Henry Winter Davis, in the House, that the portion of the President's message relating to reconstruction be referred to a special committee of which he was made chairman. This motion was adopted by the House without

hesitation, or inquiry. The referring of the reconstruction portions of the President's message to a committee which was known to be dominated by Mr. Davis, did not at the time attract sufficient attention greatly to disturb those who were confidently expecting a harmonious and progressive session of Congress, and a sweeping victory at the polls in November.

It was known, however, that Mr. Davis, at the slightest provocation, real or imaginary, was certain to assail the President with characteristic severity, but the nation-wide approval of the message seemed sufficiently emphatic and laudatory to hush into satisfying silence all hostile and harmful criticism. The progress of the nation's arms on every field so attracted public attention and stimulated patriotic interest and enthusiasm that elaborate preparations for a factional assault upon the President was systematically conducted by Mr. Davis and his followers without arousing any general apprehension of danger to the Union cause.

At length the Davis committee presented its report upon the portion of the message of the President which had been referred to it. That report came in the form of a Reconstruction Bill skillfully prepared by Mr. Davis, and in direct and flagrant conflict with the reconstruction policy of the President, as set forth and advocated in his annual message presented to Congress at the beginning of the session. That reconstruction measure was supported by Mr. Davis in a speech of great power and eloquence, but of such animus that it aroused the adherents of the President's policy. The bill contained the following preamble:

"Whereas, The so-called Confederate states are a public enemy, waging an unjust war, whose injustice is so glaring that they have no right to claim the mitigation of the extreme rights of war which are accorded by modern usage to an enemy who has a right to consider the war a just one; and,

"Whereas, None of the states which, by a regularly recorded majority of its citizens, have joined the so-called Southern Confederacy can be considered and treated as entitled to

be represented in Congress or to take any part in the political government of the Union." . . .

This preamble, as is plainly seen, contains all the vitriol of the extreme "State Suicide" policy of the radicals. It was speedily rejected by the House, but the bill itself, which throughout all its sections was dominated by the spirit of the preamble, was passed by the decisive vote of seventy-four to fifty-nine. While the discussion of this bill was in progress in the House, President Lincoln made no effort in any way to prevent its approval. When it reached the senate it was there introduced by Senator Wade, of Ohio, who had charge of the measure while it was under consideration in that body.

Mr. Wade was one of the most widely known and highly esteemed members of the senate. He was somewhat slow in winning nation-wide fame, for early in his senatorial career he was the colleague of the princely Salmon P. Chase, so magnificent in personal appearance, so manifestly strong in intellect, so profound in his knowledge of law, and so forceful in public address as to eclipse most of the other antislavery senators. But "Bluff Ben Wade," as he came to be designated, moved steadily to the front and by his great personal courage, pronounced radical convictions and rough but tremendously forceful statements of his views, soon came to be held by his antislavery associates in very high regard, and to be respected and feared by those who disapproved of his convictions.

He was a pronounced radical, and of all the members of the senate he, perhaps, was the most outspoken and severe in his hostility to all measures which he disapproved. He was a fitting associate of Henry Winter Davis, and together they constituted a force not easily resisted.

The Davis Reconstruction Bill was amended in the senate, and at length submitted to a conference committee of the two branches of Congress, all of which occupied so extended a period of time that it was not until the fourth of July, 1864,

the last day of the session, that the measure was finally passed and submitted to the President for his approval.

During all the prolonged consideration of this very objectionable measure in the senate, the President pursued the same policy of non-interference which had been observed by him while the bill was before the House. I call special attention to this fact because of the charges which were made against the President for his course respecting this measure. It is no unusual thing for a President to be very active and influential in securing congressional action for the furtherance of the policy of his administration. Indeed it is expected of him as the Chief Magistrate, and the official and responsible leader of his party, that he will exercise all suitable authority and influence to secure the enactment of laws which are in accordance with the policy of the party in power.

It is possible that Mr. Lincoln's course in avoiding all interference with the action of Congress relative to this measure was attributable to the fact that reconstruction was a new issue which had grown out of the Rebellion, and was without any historical precedents. Therefore, he regarded it as fitting, carefully to determine upon a policy in harmony with his convictions, and having presented that policy in his official communication to Congress to leave the legislative body to take such action as in the judgment of its members the exigencies of the occasion required. Whatever were the influences by which he was controlled, it is certain that his course respecting this measure when it was before Congress was entirely unobjectionable. The President had in no way intimated what would be his action with reference to the bill when it should be presented for his signature. It was evident, however, that the leading champions of that measure were somewhat apprehensive concerning his course, for, during the last hour of the session, while he was engaged in his room adjacent to the Senate Chamber in signing bills as they were passed, Senator Sumner of Massachusetts, and Representative Boutwell, of the same state, were standing near his

desk and were carefully observing what he did. Bill after bill was laid upon his table and received his signature, but when the Wade-Davis Reconstruction Bill came to his hand, he quietly laid it to one side and proceeded with his work.

This action was observed with evident disappointment by Mr. Sumner and Mr. Boutwell, but they courteously refrained from any remark respecting what he had done, and soon withdrew.

About this time bluff and rough "Zach" Chandler, of Michigan, who had entered the President's room, rudely blurted out a direct inquiry of the President as to the course he intended to pursue relative to that bill. With his customary courtesy and calmness, Mr. Lincoln replied: "This bill has been placed before me a few minutes before Congress adjourns. It is a matter of too much importance to be swallowed in that way."

With some show of feeling, Mr. Chandler declared that to veto the bill would be harmful to the party in the northwest. A brief argument ensued between the President and the Michigan senator, and when Mr. Chandler referred to the Emancipation Proclamation as an interference with slavery in the states, the President replied: "I conceive that I may in an emergency do things on military grounds which cannot be done constitutionally by Congress." When Mr. Chandler had withdrawn, the President addressing the members of his Cabinet, who were present, said: "I do not see how any of us now can deny and contradict what we have always said, that Congress has no constitutional power over slavery in the states." This sentiment was approved by every member of the Cabinet who at the time was present. The President further said: "This bill and the position of these gentlemen seem to me, in asserting that the insurrectionary states are no longer in the Union, to make the fatal admission that states, whenever they please, may of their own motion, dissolve their connection with the Union. Now we cannot survive that admis-

sion, I am convinced. If that be true, I am not President; these gentlemen are not Congress."

The President and his constitutional advisers logically discriminated between an act of Congress respecting a state constitution and the Emancipation Proclamation which was an act of the Executive, and a war measure, adopted, as was declared in the Proclamation itself, "upon military necessity."

In some way it very soon became known in the House that the President had not attached his signature to the Wade-Davis Bill and the leading advocates of that measure were at once thrown into a state of excitement and anger. But nothing could be done; and when at length the time for adjournment came, and members were anxious to complete their work and hasten to their homes, Mr. Davis was favored by a very limited audience, when standing upon his desk in the House, pale with anger, he denounced with dramatic fervor the action of the President relative to his favorite measure.

The President was not indifferent to the indications of serious disturbance and division in his party. He expressed his apprehension that the friends of the measure he had refused to sign would "do harm" in their denunciation of his course. But there was not the slightest indication of any faltering or fear upon his part. However, according to his usual custom of taking the people into his confidence, he immediately issued a proclamation in which he stated at length, and with great clearness, the provisions of the bill and the reasons which had caused him to refuse to give it his approval. As the bill was passed only a few minutes before the adjournment there was no time for the preparation of a veto measure, and he therefore followed the course which many Presidents have pursued and gave the measure what is known as a pocket veto; that is, he simply refrained from attaching his signature to the bill, which was equivalent to a veto.

All this turmoil would soon have passed away but for the insuppressible contentiousness of Wade and Davis, who re-

sponded to the President's proclamation above referred to by what is known as the "Wade-Davis Manifesto," which they published in the *New York Tribune* of August 5th, 1864. A prominent feature of that Manifesto was its violent assault upon President Lincoln for the exercise of his constitutional prerogative in defeating, by his veto, a measure which he fully believed was not only harmful in its nature, but was also in conflict with the national constitution, and with common law. The Manifesto was addressed "To the Supporters of the Government," and began by saying:

"We have read without surprise, but not without indignation, the proclamation of the President of July 8th, 1864. The supporters of the administration are responsible to the country for its conduct; and it is their right and duty to check the encroachments of the Executive on the authority of Congress, and to require it to confine itself to its proper sphere."

The first phrase in the Manifesto is an insinuation that its authors expected some act of the President like that of which they make complaint. The next phrase declares their "indignation." The mere mention of these portions of the Manifesto is sufficient to cause one to realize the exceedingly infelicitous spirit in which that Manifesto was prepared and published. But its chief indictment of the President is where it speaks of "the encroachments of the Executive on Congress," and maintains that the Executive should be required "to confine itself to its proper sphere." Remembering that these two men were able and distinguished lawyers and public men of large experience, their unqualified charge that the conduct of the President was an encroachment of the Executive upon the rights of the legislative branch of government, should be considered in the light of the statements already made respecting the very considerate and faultless course pursued by the President while this Reconstruction Bill was under consideration in the House and Senate. Certainly the accusation of encroachment could not apply to any act of Mr. Lincoln before the passage of this bill. It must, therefore,

refer to his veto of the measure, or to his proclamation, or to both. Now there is in the proclamation not one utterance or intimation that could fairly be construed into an encroachment upon the rights and the prerogatives of the legislative branch of government. That accusation, therefore, must refer to the President's refusal to make the measure effective by his signature. It seems incredible that such able and learned men should have gone before the nation making such a serious charge against the President, for in vetoing a measure of which he disapproved he was unquestionably exercising his rightful prerogative. The right of veto is as fully guaranteed to the President by the national Constitution as is the right of members of Congress to introduce, advocate and vote for measures which they desire to have enacted. No one, and least of all the President himself, for a moment questioned the right of Mr. Davis to prepare this bill and advocate its adoption, or the right of Mr. Wade to support it. And the insinuation that in preventing that objectionable measure from becoming a law, the Executive had encroached upon the rights and prerogatives of the legislative branch of government was too absurd to merit respectful consideration but for the high standing of its authors.

However, in spite of the great service which these gentlemen rendered the cause of civic righteousness, their conduct in this case should not be forgotten, but should be remembered and held up as an illustration of the utterly unreasonable extent to which great men may go when moved by passion and animosity. Viewed in the light of the almost unanimous approval which the President's reconstruction policy received when presented in his annual message it is passing strange that within six brief months so great a change had been wrought as to make possible the passage of the Davis Reconstruction Bill, and the unseemly and harmful imbroglio which plunged the government and the country into such humiliation and peril. The lowest level of this revolt was reached in the following portion of the Manifesto:

"The President by preventing this Bill from becoming a law, holds the electoral vote of the Rebel states at the dictation of his personal ambition. . . . If electors for President be allowed to be chosen in either of those states a sinister light will be cast on the motives which induced the President to hold for naught the will of Congress rather than his government in Louisiana and Arkansas."

That insinuation caused President Lincoln the most excruciating pain. It was too base to be answered and too serious to be ignored. He could only refer to it in private conversation, as he sometimes did, in terms of deep regret, but never with anger or resentment. The astonishing character of this assault upon the President appears when it is remembered that it occurred at a time when it could not possibly accomplish any good and could not fail to result in harm by adding immensely to the perils which were threatening the nation's life. Congress had adjourned and the veto of the Davis Bill was beyond recall. The President had been renominated by the national convention of his party, and his re-election was necessary to the preservation of the Union. The Confederate-favoring forces of the loyal states were all arrayed against him and were rapidly gathering into their ranks the people who were weary of the war and had been led to believe that peace by negotiation and without further bloodshed could be secured. Under this delusion multitudes of loyal people were forsaking the Union party and uniting with the opposition, and the only possible influence of the Wade-Davis Manifesto was to strengthen the opposition to the President and in like measure increase the perils of the nation.

With heart and soul, by voice and pen, I was struggling with the Union forces to aid in arresting the tide of defection from the President's supporters when that denunciatory Manifesto was published and was greeted with wild enthusiasm by the cohorts of disunion in all the loyal states. In remembrance I can feel today the pain that filled my soul when I

read that Manifesto and witnessed its appalling influence upon the public mind. In common with other Union workers throughout the land I could not refrain from crying out, "Oh, why did they do it; what good could they hope to accomplish by such methods?" And that cry became nation-wide and continued during the weeks that followed. How effective for evil that Manifesto proved to be is indicated by the fact that within eighteen days after it was published the President and the leaders of his party had become convinced that his defeat in November was altogether probable. That calamity was averted by a providential intervention, an account of which appears on other pages of this book, but the mad revolt from the disasters of which we so narrowly escaped, should be remembered that we may avoid the spirit that produced it.

The extent to which great men at that period of agitation and strife were influenced by unreasoning prejudice and passion is indicated by the fact that many of our most distinguished statesmen, even after they had expressed their approval of the President's reconstruction policy, as set forth in his annual message, aligned themselves with this utterly unreasonable assault upon President Lincoln because of his faithful and conscientious discharge of his duty as Chief Executive of the nation.

In view of all this it brings warmth and gladness to the heart to read the following from Hon. James M. Ashley, which forms a fitting conclusion to this chapter:

"The first time I called at the White House, after Senator Wade and Henry Winter Davis issued their celebrated Manifesto against Mr. Lincoln, the President, as he advanced to take my hand, said: 'Ashley, I am glad to see by the papers that you refused to sign the Wade and Davis Manifesto.'

" 'Yes, Mr. President,' I answered, 'I could not do that,' and added, for

" 'Close as sin and suffering joined  
We march to fate abreast.'

"It was a picture as we stood thus, my lips quivering with emotion, while tears stood on the eyes of both. On many occasions during the darkest hours of our great conflict men who were in accord were often in such close touch with each other that each could feel the pulse-beat of the other's heart.

"This incident tells its own story. Mr. Lincoln regarded both Mr. Wade and Mr. Davis as able and honest men, and he knew they were my warm personal friends. He also knew that nothing but a sense of public duty could have separated me from them. No one regretted their mistake more than I did; and, knowing my close relations to them, Mr. Lincoln did not hesitate to speak to me of their mistake in the kindest spirit."

So fully did public sentiment come into harmony with President Lincoln that at the next and final session of this, the Thirty-ninth Congress, the Davis Reconstruction Bill, after a fiery speech in its favor by its author, was on February 21st, 1865, killed by a vote of 91 to 64.

## VIII

### EXTRACTS FROM AN UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT OF REV. P. D. GURLEY, D.D.

**T**HE manuscript from which the following selections have been taken was secured from Doctor Gurley's daughter, Mrs. Emma K. Adams, of Washington, D. C.

One of the first things Abraham Lincoln did, upon entering the White House as President, was to select a church and take a pew for his family and himself. He decided on the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, saying in after years, "I went there because I like the pastor, Dr. Gurley, and because he preached the gospel and let politics alone. I get enough politics during the week." The intimacy and mutual admiration which existed between the President and his pastor is well known.—The Author.

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One morning, as Mr. Lincoln's pastor and intimate friend, I went over to the White House in response to an invitation from the President. He had me come over before he had his breakfast. The night before we had been together and Mr. Lincoln had said: "Doctor, you rise early; so do I; come over tomorrow morning about seven o'clock. We can talk for an hour before breakfast." This I did, as before stated, and after breakfasting with Mrs. Lincoln and exchanging a few words in the hall with the President who was about to pass up to his office, I started for home. As I passed out of the gateway which leads up to the White House and stepped on the street I was joined by a member of my congregation.

"Why, doctor," said my friend, "it is not nine o'clock; what are you doing at the Executive Mansion?" To this I replied, "Mr. Lincoln and I have been having a morning chat." "On the war, I suppose?" "Far from it," said I. "We have been talking about the state of the soul after death. That is a subject of which Mr. Lincoln never tires. I have had a great many conversations with him on the subject. This morning, however, I was a listener as Mr. Lincoln did all the talking."

\* \* \* \* \*

The day before Mr. Lincoln signed and issued the final Emancipation Proclamation, I was besieged by persons who were anxious to learn something about the proclamation and who believed because of my intimacy with Mr. Lincoln I had been apprised of its contents. Not a word escaped me concerning it, and though I knew its contents none were the wiser for my knowledge.

\* \* \* \* \*

One day as I was walking through the Capitol, I was joined by a gentleman and together we walked over to the senate. The conversation led around to Mr. Lincoln. "Doctor," said the man, "tell me, is Mr. Lincoln a member of your church?" "Mr. Lincoln," I answered, "has never applied for membership. If he did I would admit him."

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When Mr. Lincoln returned from Richmond, only a very short time before his tragic death, he told me he was very much pleased with his reception in that city. He said he never could forget how kindly he had been received. "Why, Doctor," he said, "I walked alone on the street, and any one could have shot me from a second story window."

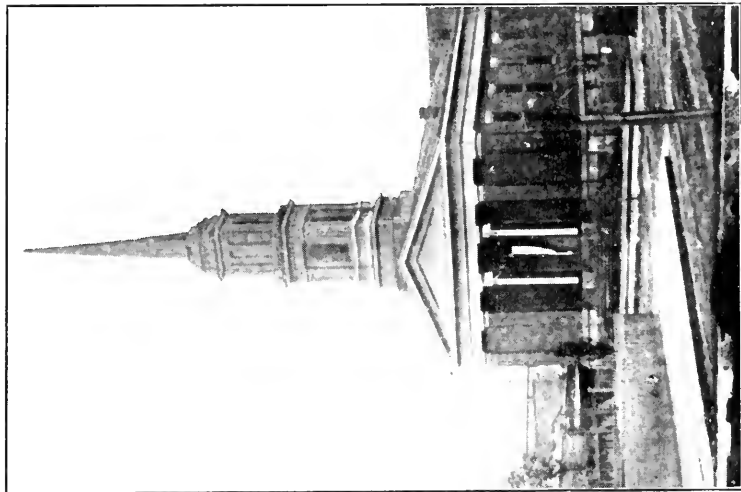
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One evening about eight o'clock, Mr. Lincoln came down the White House stairs and found two or three of the em-



REV. PHINEAS D. GURLEY, D.D.

President Lincoln's pastor, and the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, Washington, D. C.  
By courtesy of Mr. F. H. Meserve of New York City.





ployees by the front door. He said, "I want to walk over to Secretary Stanton's and would like to have one of you walk over with me." One of the men immediately got his hat and started off with Mr. Lincoln. As they crossed over Pennsylvania Avenue, Mr. Lincoln said: "I have received a great many threatening letters lately, but I don't feel afraid."

"Mr. President," said his escort, "because you are not afraid is no evidence you are free from danger; many a life has been sacrificed for want of fear."

"That's so," said the President. His face looked haggard and he walked quite slowly. Secretary Stanton lived on the north side of K street, between 13th and 14th streets, not a great distance from the Executive Mansion. When they were on the steps of the Stanton residence, waiting for the servant to answer their ring, Mr. Lincoln said to his escort: "Mr. Stanton is sick. I am going up to his room. You wait for me in the hall here."

At this time General Sherman's army was passing through the South and Mr. Lincoln was very anxious to confer with Mr. Stanton. He was upstairs with him about an hour, and when once more on the street he seemed lost in thought. Finally, as if thinking aloud he said: "Senator Harlan is a very good man."

"Yes," said the escort, "the Senator is highly spoken of." No further conversation took place. In a short time Mr. Harlan was appointed Secretary of the Interior, and it is probable that his name was suggested to the President by Mr. Stanton during that interview.

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Some one reported to Mr. Lincoln that General Joseph Singleton Mosby, of the Confederate Army, had said he would cross the Potomac River and attend one of the White House levees. If he did, no one ever knew of it but himself. However, one morning after a levee, a card was found in a snuff-

box in the Green Room on which was written, "J. S. Mosby, Colonel C. S. A."

\* \* \* \* \*

Before the war broke out, brave Admiral Shufeldt, owing to the quietness of things, resigned and became captain of a vessel that ran from New York to Cuba. When the war began Mr. Lincoln recalled him to the navy and he was restored to his former rank. Mr. Lincoln said to him during the war, "Shufeldt, I want you to go down to Mexico, and see if you can arrange to have the Negroes colonized down there." The Admiral did as requested, met with a very kind reception from President Juarez, who offered him the land south of Mexico for the purpose Mr. Lincoln had advised, and an escort of 75,000 soldiers. The letters that passed between Mr. Lincoln and Admiral Shufeldt on this subject were said never to have been seen except by four persons, namely, Mr. Lincoln, Secretary Seward, President Juarez and Admiral Shufeldt, as no record was kept of them owing to their not being placed on file in the State Department.

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One day a Cabinet officer and I had been spending an hour with Mr. Lincoln. When the time came for us to depart the Secretary said: "Mr. President, I wish you would describe the proper manner of telling a story. How is it yours are so interesting?"

"Well," said Mr. Lincoln, "there are two ways of relating a story. If you have an auditor who has the time, and is inclined to listen, lengthen it out, pour it out slowly as if from a jug. If you have a poor listener, hasten it, shorten it, shoot it out of a pop-gun."

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Lincoln was very much impressed with an address made over the coffin of his little son Willie. The day after the funeral he wrote me a note and asked me to write it out for him so he could give copies to his friends. He often



This is a picture of a bouquet now in  
 Mr. E. F. Chapman's collection, at Los  
 Angeles. The flowers were picked and  
 presented to my mother by Abraham Lincoln,  
 during and evening spent at the White  
 House by my Parents, Bird, Mr. and  
 Mrs. P. B. Smiley.

Emma E. Adams,

October 9, 1914.



spoke to me of how he liked to read it over. This address was as follows: "Sad and solemn is the occasion that brings us here today. A dark shadow of affliction has fallen upon this habitation and upon the hearts of its inmates. The news thereof has already gone forth to the extremities of the country. The nation has heard it with deep and tender emotion. The eye of the nation is moistened with tears as it turns today to the Presidential mansion. The heart of the nation sympathizes with its chief magistrate while to the unprecedented weight of civil care which presses upon him is added the burden of this great domestic sorrow, and the prayers of the nation ascend to heaven on his behalf and on behalf of his weeping family that God's grace may be sufficient for them, and that in this hour of sore bereavement and trial they may have the presence and succor of Him who said: 'Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.' Oh, that they may be enabled to lay their heads upon His infinite bosom and find, as many other smitten ones have found, that He is their truest refuge and strength and a very present help in trouble.

"The beloved youth whose death we now and here lament was a child of bright intelligence and of peculiar promise. He possessed many excellent qualities of mind and heart which greatly endeared him not only to the family circle but to all his youthful acquaintances and friends. His mind was active, he was inquisitive and conscientious; his disposition was amiable and affectionate. His impulses kind and generous; his words and manners were gentle and attractive. It is easy to see how a child thus endowed could, in the course of eleven years entwine himself around the hearts of those who knew him best; nor can we wonder that the grief of his affectionate mother today is like that of Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they were not.

"His sickness was an attack of fever threatening from the first and painfully productive of mental wandering and delirium. All that the tenderest parental care and watching

and the most assiduous and skillful medical treatment could do was done, and though at times even in the last stages of the disease his symptoms were regarded as favorable and inspired a faint and wavering hope of his recovery, still the insidious malady pursued its course unchecked, and on Thursday last, at the hour of five in the afternoon, the golden bowl was broken and the emancipated spirit returned to the God who gave it. That departure was a sore bereavement to parents and brothers, and while they weep they also rejoice in the confidence that their loss is his gain, for they believe as well they may, that he has gone to Him who said: 'Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven'; and that now with kindred spirits, and with a little brother he never saw on earth, he beholds the glory and sings the praises of the Redeemer. Blessed be God!

“ ‘There is a world above  
Where sorrow is unknown,  
A long eternity of love  
Formed for the good alone.  
And faith beholds the dying here,  
Translated to that glorious sphere.’

“It is well for us and very comforting on such an occasion as this to get a clear and scriptural view of the Providence of God. His kingdom ruleth over all. All those events which in any wise affect our condition and happiness are in His hands and at His disposal. Disease and death are His messengers; they go forth at His bidding and their fearful work is limited or extended according to the good pleasure of His will. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His care much less one of the human family, for we are of more value than many sparrows. These bereaved parents may be sure that their affliction has not come forth of the dust nor has their trouble sprung out of the ground. It is the well-



#### DEATHBED OF LINCOLN

Presented by Mrs. Abraham Lincoln in 1865 to my father, Rev. P. D. Gurley, D.D. (Emma H. Adams.) From the original photograph owned by Mrs. Lincoln, and now in the author's collection.



ordered procedure of their Father and their God. A mysterious dealing they may consider it; but still it is His dealing and while they mourn He is saying to them, as the Lord Jesus once said to His disciples when they were perplexed: 'What I do ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter.' What we need in the hour of trial, and what we should seek by earnest prayer is confidence in Him who sees the end from the beginning and doeth all things well. Let us bow in His presence with an humble and teachable spirit; let us be still and know that He is God; let us acknowledge His hand and hear His voice; inquire after His will and seek His Holy Spirit, as our counsellor and guide, and all will be well in the end. In His light shall we see light; by His grace our sorrows will be sanctified and made a blessing to our souls, and by and by we shall have occasion to say with blended gratitude and rejoicing, 'It is good for us that we have been afflicted.' "

Soon after this the President and Mrs. Lincoln presented me with a beautiful ebony cane; the head was six inches in length, of small gold roses, and the following was engraved upon it: "Rev. P. D. Gurley, D.D., from Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, 1862." It was in February, 1862, that this address was delivered in the room in which Willie died and from which he was buried. On account of the nature of the disease (varioid) his funeral was private as possible. I was with the President and Mrs. Lincoln often during these dark hours.

Willie's death was a great blow to Mr. Lincoln, coming as it did in the midst of the war, when his burdens seemed already greater than he could bear. The little boy was always interested in the war and used to go down to the White House stables and read the battle news to the employees and talk over the outcome. These men all loved him and thought, for one of his years, he was most unusual. When he was dying he said to me, "Doctor Gurley, I have six one dollar gold pieces in my bank over there on the mantel. Please

send them to the missionaries for me." After his death those six one dollar pieces were shown to my Sunday School and the scholars were informed of Willie's request. He died in what was always called the "Prince of Wales Room," as the prince occupied it when visiting President Buchanan.

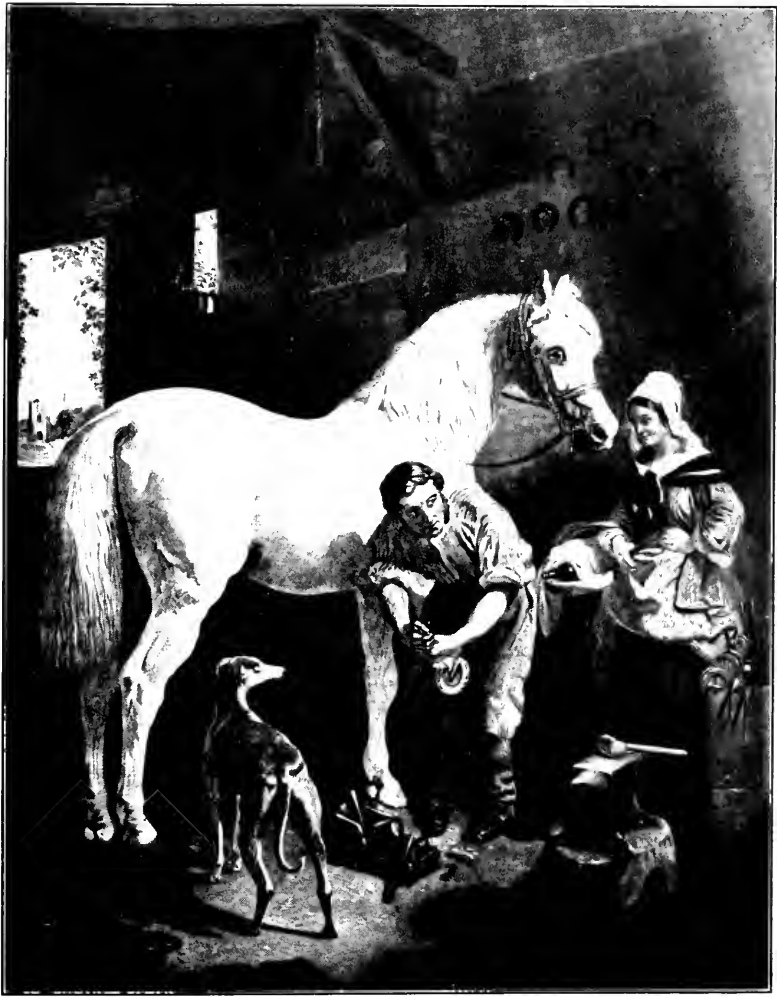
After his son's death, Mr. Lincoln was greatly annoyed by the report that he was interested in spiritualism. He told me he thought the report originated from the fact that a medium had chanced to call on Mrs. Lincoln. "A simple faith in God is good enough for me, and beyond that I do not concern myself very much," he added.

Willie was laid away in Oak Hill cemetery, Georgetown, D. C. Later, when his father's body was taken to Springfield, the child's remains were also taken. At a little town where the funeral train stopped for coal, some children came to the car and handed up a wreath, evidently the work of their own little hands, and one of them said as the flowers were accepted: "We knew every one would give Mr. Lincoln flowers, so we made this wreath for little Willie's coffin."

In Harrisburg, an old colored man approached the funeral train as it came to a stop in the station. He was trembling, and as he came to the car he took off his hat, bowed his head, and while the tears streamed down his face, exclaimed: "Massa Lincoln's dead, Massa Lincoln's dead, but de Lord spared him till he could set de poor colored people free!"

To me the most touching incident in connection with that never-to-be-forgotten journey to Springfield, with the remains, occurred while we were in Philadelphia. An old colored woman lamenting loudly for the dead President was outside Independence Hall where the remains lay in state. She joined the throng who were slowly passing through to take a last look at our beloved chieftain. As she approached the casket she wept aloud, crying, "Oh, Abraham Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln, are you dead?"

The President is dead! but in my fancy I can yet hear his voice, which was of moderate pitch. It was always con-



### THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

The engraving from which this is copied hung in the room where President Lincoln died. Copies of the picture were so fully picked up that it was after thirty years' search that the copy now in Dr. Ervin Chapman's collection was secured.



versational and remarkable for its kindly tones. At times he used expressive gestures, but he never allowed his voice to reach a climax. And his eyes! During 1865, those sad eyes were often bloodshot from loss of sleep. He used to say, "While others are asleep I think," and then sadly add, "Night is the only time I have to think."

## THE CENOTAPH

And so they buried Lincoln? Strange and vain!  
Has any creature thought of Lincoln hid  
In any vault, 'neath any coffin-lid,  
In all the years since that wild Spring of pain?  
'Tis false,—he never in the grave hath lain,  
You could not bury him although you slid  
Upon his clay the Cheops pyramid  
Or heaped it with the Rocky Mountain chain.  
They slew themselves; they but set Lincoln free.  
In all the earth his great heart beats as strong,  
Shall beat while pulses throb to chivalry  
And burn with hate of tyranny and wrong.  
Whoever will may find him, anywhere  
Save in the tomb. Not there,—he is not there!

—*James T. McKay.*

## PART III

The election has placed our President beyond the pale of human envy or human harm, as he is above the pale of human ambition. Henceforth all men will come to see him as we have seen him—a true, loyal, patient, patriotic, and benevolent man. Having no longer any motive to malign or injure him, detraction will cease, and Abraham Lincoln will take his place with Washington and Franklin and Jefferson and Adams and Jackson—among the benefactors of the country and of the human race.—*Tribute of William M. Seward.*

Springfield, Mo., April 6, 1860  
Rich<sup>d</sup>. & Wm. Lincoln, Esq.

My dear Sir

Owing to absence from home, yours of March 19<sup>th</sup> was not received till yesterday— You are a little mistaken— My grand father did not go from Berkeley Co., Pa., but, as I learn, his ancestor, also, some time before his birth— He was born in Rocking- ham Co. Va.; went from there to New- bury, and then was killed by Indians about 1784— That the family originated from Berkeley, I learned a dozen years ago, by letter, from one of the persons residing at Sparta, Rockingham Co., Va. His name was David Lincoln— I remember, long ago, seeing Amos Lincoln, & David Lincoln, said to be sons of Isaac Lincoln, or Amos Lincoln, who was said to have been a cousin of my

grand father— I have no doubt you and I are distantly relatives— I should think from what you say, that you and my father was some- thing—

I shall be glad to hear from you at any time— Yours very truly  
A. Lincoln



## CHAPTER I

### STORIES ABOUT LINCOLN

#### LED BY THE SPIRIT

**I**SAAC and Sarah Harvey, very devout Quakers, resided in Clinton County, Ohio, about fifty miles northwest of Cincinnati. They were ardent abolitionists and Isaac was so obedient to "the movings of the Spirit" that his neighbors, who held him in reverence and esteem, regarded him as very eccentric in some of his religious convictions and conduct. In 1868 Mrs. Nellie Blessing-Eyster, who now resides in Berkeley, California, visited the Harveys and received from Isaac, who had become blind, an account of an interview with President Lincoln in September, 1862. The story as told by Mrs. Eyster is here published by her permission and is as follows:

"Folding his thin hands, his face wearing an expression of sweet gravity, and his words coming slowly as if he were weighing the value of each, he said:

"I will answer thy question. My quiet life has known few storms. I have loved God as my first, best and dearest friend, and He has ever dealt most tenderly with me. During the first years of the great rebellion, when I read and heard of the condition of the poor crushed Negroes, I tried to think it was a cunning device of bad men to create greater enmity between the North and the South; but when I read Lincoln's speeches, I thought so good and wise a man could not be deceived, and then I resolved to go and see for myself. At one of our First-day meetings I spoke of my intention, but although the brethren felt as I did upon the subject they

said it was rash for me to expose my life, for I could do no good. Nevertheless I went, traveling on horseback through most of the Southland.

“ ‘Often my life was in danger from guerrillas, but there was always an unseen arm between me and the actual foe, and in a few weeks I returned, saying the half had not been told of the sufferings of these poor, despised, yet God-fearing and God-trusting people.’

“ ‘Here his voice trembled with the overflow of pity of which his heart seemed the fountain.

“ ‘That summer,’ he continued, ‘I plowed and reaped and gathered in my harvest as usual. Day by day I prayed, at home and in the field, that God would show His delivering power as he had to the children of Israel. Nothing seemed to come in answer. Occasionally during the beginning of the war, news reached us that battles had been fought by the Northern men and victories won, but still the poor colored people were not let go.

“ ‘One day while plowing I heard a voice, whether inside me or outside of me I know not, but I was awake. It said: “Go thou and see the President.” I answered: “Yea, Lord, Thy servant heareth.” And unhitching my plow, I went at once to the house and said to mother: “Wilt thou go with me to Washington to see the President?”

“ ‘ “Who sends thee?” she asked.

“ ‘ “The Lord,” I answered.

“ ‘ “Where thou goest I will go,” said mother, and began to make ready.

“ ‘My friends called me crazed; some said that this trip would be more foolish than the first, and that I, who had never been to Washington and knew no one in it, could not gain access to the great President.

“ ‘The Lord knew I did not want to be foolhardy, but I had that on my mind which I must tell President Lincoln, and I had faith that He who feedeth the sparrows would direct me.

"We left here on the 17th of Ninth month, 1862, the first time mother had been fifty miles from home in sixty years. It was a pleasant morning. Before we left the house we prayed that God would direct our wandering, or, if He saw best, direct us to return. Part of our journey was by stage. Every one looked at and spoke to us kindly. Oh, God's world is beautiful when we see the invisible in it.

"We got to Washington the next evening. It was about early candle light, and there was so much confusion at the depot and on the street that mother clung to my arm saying: "Oh, Isaac, we ought not to have come here! It looks like Babylon!"

"But the Lord will help us if we have faith that we are doing His will," I replied, and we walked away from the cars.

"Under a lamp-post there stood a noble-looking man, reading a letter. I stepped before him and said: "Good friend, wilt thou tell us where to find President Lincoln?"

"He looked us all over before he spoke. We were neat and clean, and soon his face got bright and smiling, and he asked us a few plain questions. I told him we were Friends from Ohio who had come all of these weary miles to say a few words with President Lincoln, because the Lord had sent us.

"He nodded his head and said, "I understand." Then he took us to a large house called Willard's Hotel, and up to a little room away from all the noise.

"Stay here," he said, "and I will see when the President can admit you."

"He was gone a long time, but meanwhile a young man brought us up a nice supper, which mother said was very hospitable in him, and when the gentleman returned he handed me a slip of paper upon which was written, "Admit the bearer to the chamber of the President at 9:30 o'clock tomorrow morning." My heart was so full of gratitude that I could not express my thanksgiving in words. That night was as peaceful as those at home in the meadows.

"The next morning the kind gentleman came and conducted us to the house nearby in which the President lived. Every one whom we met seemed to know our conductor and took off their hats to him. I was glad that he had so many friends. At the door of the big porch he left us, promising to return in an hour. "You must make your talk with him brief," he said. "A big battle has just been fought at Antietam. The North is victorious, but at least 12,000 men have been killed or wounded, and the President, like the rest of us, is in great trouble."

"I did not speak. I could not. The room into which we were first shown was full of people, all waiting, we supposed, to see the President. "Ah, Isaac, we shall not get near him today. See the anxious faces who come before us," whispered mother.

" "As God wills," I said.

"It was a sad place to be in, truly. There were soldiers' wives and wounded soldiers sitting around the large room, and not a soul but from whom joy and peace seemed to have fled. Some were weeping; soldiers with clanking spurs and short swords were rapidly walking through the halls; men with newspapers in their hands were reading the news from the seat of war, and the President's house seemed the center of the world. I felt what a solemn thing it must be to have so much power.'

"Here Uncle Isaac's voice got husky and tears fell from his sightless eyes upon his wrinkled hands. I reverently brushed them off, and in a few minutes he continued:

"When the summons came for us to enter—it was an advance of the others—my knees smote together, and for an instant I tottered. "Keep heart, Isaac," mother whispered, and we went forward. I fear thou wilt think me vain if I tell what followed.'

"No fear, Uncle Isaac. Please proceed.'

“‘It seemed so wonderful that, for a moment, I could not realize it. To think that such humble people as we were should be there in the actual presence of the greatest and best man in the world, and to be received by him as kindly as if he were our own son, made me feel very strange. He shook hands with us and put his chair between us. Oh, how I honored the good man! But I said:

“‘“Wilt thou pardon me that I do not remove my hat?” Then he smiled, and his grave face lit up as he said, “Certainly. I understand it all.” The dear, dear man’—and again Uncle Isaac stopped as though to revel, as a devout nun counts her beads, in the memory of that interview.

“But I was impatient. ‘What then, sir?’ The answer came with a solemnity indescribable. My curiosity and his reminiscence were not in harmony.

“‘Of that half hour it does not become me to speak. I will think of it gratefully throughout eternity. At last we had to go. The President took a hand of each of us in his, saying, “I thank you for this visit. May God bless you.” Was there ever greater condescension than that? Just then I asked him if he would object to writing just a line or two, certifying that I had fulfilled my mission, so that I could show it to the council at home. He sat down to his table.

“‘Wilt thou open the drawer of that old secretary in the corner behind thee, and hand me a little box from therein?’

“Up to that moment I had not noticed my surroundings. The old-fashioned furniture was oiled and rubbed, and a large secretary which belonged to the Colonial period was conspicuous. I obeyed instructions, and soon placed in the old man’s now trembling fingers a small square tin box which was as bright as silver. Between two layers of cotton was a folded paper, already yellow. The words were verbatim these:

“‘I take pleasure in asserting that I have had profitable intercourse with friend Isaac Harvey and his good wife, Sarah

Harvey. May the Lord comfort them as they have sustained me.

“ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“Sept. 19, 1862.”<sup>1</sup>

“‘Uncle Isaac!’ I exclaimed. ‘I can scarcely realize that away off here in the backwoods I should read such words traced by Mr. Lincoln’s own hands. How singular!’

“‘Not more so than the whole event was to us, dear child, from the first to the last. The following Second-day the preliminary Proclamation of Emancipation was issued. Thank God! Thank God!’

“‘It is not possible to depict the devout fervor of the old patriarch’s thanksgiving.

“‘Our new friend was waiting at the outside door when we came out. I showed him the testimonial. He nodded his head affirmatively and said, “It is well.”

“‘We soon left Washington, for our work was done and I longed for the quiet of home. Our friend took us to the omnibus which conveyed us to the cars, having treated us with a gracious hospitality which I can never forget. May the Lord care for him as he cared for us.’

“‘Did you not learn his name?’ I inquired, wondering what official in those days would have bestowed so much time and courtesy upon these unpretending folk.

“‘Yes, he is high in the esteem of men and they call him Salmon P. Chase.’”

In connection with this remarkable story, the validity of which cannot be questioned, it is interesting to note that the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation issued a few days after the visit of Isaac and Sarah Harvey as stated on preceding pages was submitted to the Cabinet by President Lin-

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to H. W. W., Jesse Harvey, Isaac’s son, thus accounts for this precious document: “We kept the writing given by A. Lincoln for years. It was borrowed some times, and finally was so soiled we concluded it would not be of interest to any one, and destroyed it with other old papers.”

coln nearly two months before, and was at that time withheld from publication by the President that it might be issued in connection with the announcement of a great victory in the field. It is, however, certain that by his interview with the Harveys, Mr. Lincoln was encouraged and strengthened in his purposes to take that important step.

### A MOTHER'S PLEA

During the dark days of the Rebellion a telegram from the front was sent to a mother living in Minnesota, informing her that her youngest son, who had recently enlisted, had been court-martialed and sentenced to be shot for sleeping while on picket duty. It was not the first heartbreaking message she had received from the front during the three years of bloody strife and she had, by severe discipline, been chastened into a spirit of patriotic and religious submission to crushing bereavement. But this, as she believed, was beyond the limit of righteous submission, and with the heroism which characterized the womanhood of those days, she exclaimed, "They shall not shoot him," and started for Washington.

There were others there when she was ushered into President Lincoln's room, but she seemed unmindful of their presence. With perfect self-control, but with intense earnestness, she briefly recited her story to the great chieftain and calmly and confidently awaited his reply.

But when she discovered by his manner that he was disinclined to grant her request for her boy's pardon, she fell upon her knees at his feet, and seizing his hands in an agonizing mother's convulsive grasp, she cried:

"Mr. President, I cannot, I will not be denied! You must save my boy! His father and three brothers have given their lives to save the nation. Three have fallen on the field of battle and one, mortally wounded, died in the hospital. Then my youngest and only remaining son, although too young to be liable to draft, when the last of his brothers fell, promptly

took his place. When almost exhausted from three days and nights of a toilsome march, he was placed on picket duty, and because he was found sleeping at his post, they intend to shoot him like a dog! Mr. President, you must not permit them to do it. You must not, you will not permit my brave, heroic boy thus to be cruelly assassinated just because his youthful form was unequal to the burdens put upon him! Remember his fallen father and brothers, remember your own son, and save my boy!"

Those who witnessed the scene were deeply moved and were delighted when they saw the tender-hearted President press a handkerchief to his tearful eyes that he might see to write and sign the brave young soldier's pardon.

### COURT IN A CORN-FIELD

The late Harvey Lee Ross of Oakland, California, was one of my true friends, and was always happy to converse about Abraham Lincoln, whom he had known quite intimately during his residence in Illinois. One of the many pleasing Lincoln stories he related to me is the following:

"I had a quarter section of land, two miles south of Macomb, that came to me from my father's estate. It was a fine quarter, but there was a little defect in the title, which could be remedied by the evidence of a man named Hagerty, who lived six miles west of Springfield and who knew the facts I wished to prove. I had noticed in the papers that court was in session at Springfield, and as court convened but twice a year I immediately started for that place, which was sixty miles from my home. I found my witness and took him with me. On arriving at Springfield, we went directly to Mr. Lincoln's office, which was over a store on the west side of the square. I think the office was about fourteen feet square and contained two tables, two bookcases and four or five chairs, while the floor was perfectly bare. I told Mr. Lincoln my business and showed him my title papers, which

he looked over and then remarked to me: 'I am sorry to have to tell you that you are a little too late, for this court adjourned this morning and does not convene again for six months, and Judge Thomas has gone home. He lives on his farm a mile east of the public square, but,' said he, 'we will go and see him and see if anything can be done for you.'

"I told him I would get a carriage and we would drive out, but he said, 'No; I can walk if you can.' I said I would just as soon walk as ride, and before we started he pulled off his coat and laid it on a chair, taking from the pocket a large bandana silk handkerchief to wipe the perspiration from his face, as it was a very warm day in August. He struck off across the public square in his shirt sleeves with the red handkerchief in one hand and my bundle of papers in the other, while my witness and I followed.

"We soon came to Judge Thomas's residence, which was a one-story frame house. Mr. Lincoln knocked at the door—at that time there were no doorbells—and the judge's wife came to the door. Mr. Lincoln asked if the judge was at home and she replied that he had gone to the north part of the farm, where they had a tenant house, to help his men put up a corncrib. She said if we went the main road it would be about a half mile, but we could cut across the cornfield and it would not be more than a quarter of a mile. Mr. Lincoln said if she would show us the path we would take the short cut, so she came out of the house and showed us where the path struck off across the field from their barn. We followed this path, Mr. Lincoln in the lead, and the witness and I following in Indian file, and soon came to where the judge and his men were raising a log house, about 12 by 20 feet in size, which was to serve as a corncrib and hoghouse. Mr. Lincoln told Judge Thomas how I had come from Fulton county and brought my witness to town just after court had adjourned, and said he thought he would come out and see if anything could be done. The judge looked over the title papers and stated he guessed they could fix it

up, so he swore my witness, with whom he was acquainted, and procuring a pen and ink from his tenant fixed the papers.

"The judge and all the balance of us were in our shirt sleeves, and Mr. Lincoln remarked to the judge that it was a kind of shirt-sleeved court.

" 'Yes,' replied the judge, 'a shirt-sleeved court in a corn-field.' After the business had been transacted, Mr. Lincoln asked Judge Thomas if he did not want some help in rolling up the logs, and the judge replied that there were two logs that were pretty heavy and he would like to have us help roll them up. So before we left we helped roll the logs up, Mr. Lincoln steering one end and the judge the other. I offered to pay the judge for taking the deposition of my witness, but he said he guessed I had helped with the raising enough to pay for that and would take nothing for his work. When we got back to Lincoln's office in town I think we had walked at least three miles. Mr. Lincoln put my papers in a large envelope with the name 'Stuart & Lincoln' printed at the top. 'Now,' said he, 'when you go home put those papers on record and you will have a good title to your land.'

"I took out my pocketbook to pay him and supposed he would charge me about \$10, as I knew he was always moderate in his charges. 'Now, Mr. Lincoln,' said I, 'how much shall I pay you for this work and the long walk through the hot sun and dust?' He paused for a moment and took the big silk handkerchief and wiped the perspiration off that was running down his face, and said: 'I guess I will not charge you anything for that. I will let it go on the old score.' When he said that it broke me all up, and I could not keep the tears from running down my face, for I could recall many instances where he had been so good and kind to me when I was carrying the mail; then for him to say he would charge me nothing for this work was more kindness than I could stand. I suppose what he meant by the old score was that I had occasionally helped him in his store and

post office and my father had assisted him some when he got the post office."

### WORLD-WIDE FAME

"Several years after Lincoln's death (1874) the writer, then a student in Germany, was traveling in Switzerland. Arriving early one morning at the little village of Thusis, at the northern end of the Via Mala, he entered an inn for breakfast. As he seated himself at a table he was surprised and delighted to notice hanging on a wall directly in front of him, a fine engraving of Abraham Lincoln.

"It was like meeting an old friend and so far away from America, too, in that little place among the Alps, at the high mountains which are always covered with snow. The first thought was here is a Swiss gentleman who has lived in the United States and has brought this picture back home with him. So when the landlord entered, I said, 'Excuse me, sir, but have you not been in the United States?'

"'No, indeed,' he replied, 'but why do you ask?'

"'That picture of Lincoln,' I said; 'where did you get it?'

"'Oh, that picture! Why I bought that at Lucerne. It is the only one in this Canton (county) and I would not sell it for forty gulden,' he exclaimed.

"Now thoroughly interested, I again asked, 'What made you buy it?' He answered very earnestly, 'Because I love the man and his principles. He was a great man. Were you ever in America?' he then asked.

"'Oh, yes! I am an American,' I replied.

"'What! a native-born American,' he exclaimed, reaching out his hand. 'Give me your hand. I am proud to meet a countryman of the great Lincoln,' he continued. 'Now you must stay with me and let me show you the points of interest about here.'

"'You are very good,' said I, 'and since your love and reverence for Abraham Lincoln has prompted your kindness, in his name I thank you.'

"So presently we started and I enjoyed one of the happiest and most profitable days of my entire journey because I was a countryman of the good and great Lincoln. It was his life of kind deeds, his poverty and struggle, his honesty and truthfulness, and his final death for the cause of liberty and union of the states which, when off there, thousands of miles from America, had won for me this generous hospitality. The incident shows that a single character may ennoble and glorify a nation. A single name like magic secure consideration and protection to a race." <sup>2</sup>

### WHERE THE WHETSTONE WAS

In 1834, when Lincoln was a candidate for the legislature, he called on a certain farmer to ask for his support. He found him in the hayfield, and was urging his cause when the dinner-bell sounded. The farmer invited him to dinner, but he declined politely, and added:

"If you will let me have the scythe while you are gone, I will mow around the field a couple of times."

When the farmer returned he found three rows neatly mowed. The scythe lay against the gate-post, but Lincoln had disappeared.

Nearly thirty years afterward the farmer and his wife, now grown old, were at a White House reception, and stood waiting in line to shake hands with the President. When they got near him in line, Lincoln saw them and calling an aide, told him to take them to one of the small parlors, where he would see them as soon as he got through the hand-shaking. Much surprised, the old couple were led away. Presently Mr. Lincoln came in, and greeting them with an outstretched hand and a warm smile, called them by name.

"Do you mean to say," exclaimed the farmer, "that you remember me after all these years?"

<sup>2</sup> Silas G. Pratt, *Lincoln in Story*, pp. 215, 217.



AS SEEN AND LOVED ABROAD

From a picture woven in silk in Switzerland in 1865, and now  
in Dr. Ervin Chapman's collection.



"I certainly do," said the President, and he went on to recall the day he had mowed round the farmer's timothy field.

"Yes, that's so," said the old man, still in astonishment. "I found the field mowed and the scythe leaning up against the gate-post, but I have always wanted to ask you, Mr. President, what you did with the whetstone?"

Lincoln smoothed his hair back from his brow a moment in deep thought; then his face lighted up.

"Yes, I do remember now," he said. "I put the whetstone on top of the high gate-post."

And when he got back to Illinois again the farmer found the whetstone on top of the gate-post, where it had lain for more than twenty-five years.

### LED BY A CHILD

On April 11, 1865, Lincoln spoke from a window of the White House to a large and joyful crowd, gathered in honor of Lee's surrender. The President's speech was full of conciliation. Senator Harlan followed, and in the course of his remarks touched on the thought uppermost in everybody's mind. "What shall we do with the rebels?" he asked. A voice answered from the crowd, "Hang them!"

Lincoln's small son was in the room, playing with the pens on the table. Looking up he caught his father's pained expression.

"No, no, papa," he cried in his childish voice. "Not hang them. Hang *on* to them!"

"That is it! Tad has got it. We must hang on to them!" the President exclaimed in triumph.<sup>3</sup>

### LINCOLN, THE LAWYER, ACTS AS A PASTOR

Visiting Captain Gilbert J. Greene at his home in Washingtonville, New York, I said: "Captain, what do you think of Lincoln's religion? There is evidence which satisfies me

<sup>3</sup>Helen Nicolay's *Personal Traits of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 357, 358.

that he was a thoroughly religious man, and a Christian." He answered: "You are correct in your opinion. At one time in his life he was an unbeliever, and through life he held some religious views peculiar to himself, but in the cardinal doctrines of Christianity he was sound. One night he said to me, then a boy about nineteen, calling me by my first name, 'Gilbert, you have to stand at your printer's case all day and I have to sit all day, let us take a walk.' As we walked on the country road out of Springfield, he turned his eyes to the heavens full of stars, and told me their names and their distance from us and the swiftness of their motion. He said the ancients used to arrange them so as to make monsters, serpents, animals of one kind or another out of them, but, said he, 'I never behold them that I do not feel that I am looking in the face of God. I can see how it might be possible for a man to look down upon the earth and be an atheist, but I cannot conceive how he could look up into the heavens and say there is no God.' The information and inspiration received that night during the walk I shall never forget.

"One day he said to me, 'Gilbert, there is a woman dangerously sick living fifteen miles out in the country, who has sent for me to come and write her will. I should like to have you go along with me; I would enjoy your company, and the trip would be a little recreation for you.' I cheerfully accepted the invitation. We found the woman much worse than we expected. She had only a few hours to live. When Lincoln had written the will and it had been signed and witnessed, the woman said to him: 'Now, I have my affairs for this world arranged satisfactorily, I am thankful to say that long before this I have made preparation for the other life I am so soon to enter. I sought and found Christ as my Saviour, who has been my stay and comfort through the years and is now near to me to carry me over the river of death. I do not fear death; I am really glad that my time has come, for loved ones have gone before me and I rejoice in the hope of meeting them so soon.' Mr. Lincoln said to

her, 'Your faith in Christ is wise and strong, your hope of a future life is blessed. You are to be congratulated on passing through this life so usefully and into the future so happily.' She asked him if he would not read a few verses out of the Bible to her. They offered him the Book, but he did not take it, but began reciting from memory the 23rd Psalm, laying special emphasis upon 'Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.' Without the Book he took up the first part of the 14th of John. 'In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself.' After he had given these and other quotations from the Scriptures he recited several hymns, closing with 'Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me.' I thought at the time I had never heard any elocutionist speak with such ease or power as he did. I am an old man now, but my heart melts as it did then in that death chamber, as I remember how, with almost divine pathos, he spoke the last stanza:

"While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When my eyes shall close in death,  
When I soar to worlds unknown,  
And behold Thee on Thy throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.'

"A little while after the woman passed to her reward. As we rode home in the buggy, I expressed surprise that he should have acted pastor as well as attorney so perfectly, and he replied, 'God and eternity were very near to me today.'"

In concluding the interview, I said to Captain Greene, "You have done the memory of the martyred President and the Christian public a service in opening this new window

on the religious side of Lincoln's nature. However much the mind may be tempted to doubt, there are times when the heart must believe. The religion of the dying woman and of the ministering attorney is the need of the universal heart and will become the religion of the world." <sup>4</sup>

### THOUGHTFUL FOR OTHERS

Colonel W. H. Crook, President Lincoln's bodyguard, in "Memories of the White House," gives the following account of how it was made possible for Wilkes Booth to enter the President's box in Ford's Theater.

"The only time that President Lincoln failed to say good-night to me—when we parted after having been together for hours—was on the evening shortly before he started for Ford's Theater, where he was murdered. As I mentioned on another occasion, some years ago, Mr. Lincoln had told me that afternoon of a dream he had had for three successive nights, concerning his impending assassination. Of course, the constant dread of such a calamity made me somewhat nervous, and I almost begged him to remain in the Executive Mansion that night, and not to go to the theater. But he would not disappoint Mrs. Lincoln and others who were to be present. Then I urged that he allow me to stay on duty and accompany him; but he would not hear of this, either.

" 'No, Crook,' he said, kindly but firmly, 'you have had a long, hard day's work already, and must go home to sleep and rest. I cannot afford to have you get all tired out and exhausted.'

"It was then that he neglected, for the first and only time, to say good-night to me. Instead, he turned, with his kind, grave face, and said: 'Good-bye, Crook,' and went into his room.

"I thought of it at the moment; and a few hours later, when the awful news flashed over Washington that he had

<sup>4</sup> Rev. F. C. Iglehart, D.D., The Speaking Oak.

been shot, his last words were so burned into my memory that they never have been, and never can be forgotten.

"Although I have already stated the fact in print, I wish to repeat it here—that when Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln and their party sat in their box at Ford's Theater that fateful night, the guard who was acting as my substitute took his position at the rear of the box, close to an entrance leading into the box from the dress circle of the theater. His orders were to stand there, fully armed, and to permit no unauthorized person to pass into the box. His orders were to stand there and protect the President at all hazards.

"From the spot where he was thus stationed, this guard could not see the stage or the actors; but he could hear the words the actors spoke, and he became so interested in them that, incredible as it may seem, he quietly deserted his post of duty, and walking down the dimly-lighted side aisle, deliberately took a seat in the last row of the dress circle.

"It was while the President was thus absolutely unprotected through this guard's amazing recklessness—to use no stronger words—that Booth rushed through the entrance to the box, just deserted by the guard, and accomplished his foul deed. Realization of his part in the assassination so preyed upon the mind and spirit of the guard that he finally died as a result of it."

### THE HIRED MAN

The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* is responsible for the following: "In the autumn of 1830, a traveling book peddler, who afterward became a successful publisher, and the head of a firm whose name is well known in the United States today, came to the door of a log cabin on a farm in eastern Illinois, and asked for the courtesy of a night's lodging. There was no inn near. The good wife was hospitable but perplexed, 'for,' said she, 'we can feed your beast but we can't lodge you unless you are willing to sleep with the hired man.' 'Let's have a look at him first,' said the peddler. The woman

pointed to the side of the house, where a lank, six-foot man, in ragged but clean clothes, was stretched on the grass reading a book. 'He'll do,' said the stranger. 'A man who reads a book as hard as that fellow seems to, has got too much else to think of besides my watch or my small change.'

"The hired man was Abraham Lincoln; and when he was President the two met in Washington and laughed together over the story of their early rencontre."

### WATCHED WITH A DYING SOLDIER

One of the prettiest stories told of Abraham Lincoln is that, on visiting a military hospital, he stood at the bedside of a Vermont boy of about sixteen years of age, who was mortally wounded. Taking the dying boy's thin, white hand in his own, the President said in a tender tone, "Well, my poor boy, what can I do for you?"

The young fellow looked up into the President's kindly face, and asked: "Won't you write to my mother for me?"

"That I will," answered Mr. Lincoln, and calling for a pen, ink and paper, he seated himself by the side of the bed and wrote from the boy's dictation. It was a long letter, but the President betrayed no signs of weariness. When it was finished he arose, saying, "I will post this as soon as I get back to my office. Now, is there anything else I can do for you?"

The boy looked up appealingly to the President. "Won't you stay with me?" he asked. "I do want to hold on to your hand." Mr. Lincoln at once perceived the lad's meaning. The appeal was too strong for him to resist, so he sat down by his side, and took hold of his hand. For two hours the President sat there patiently as though he had been the boy's father. When the end came, he bent over and folded the thin hands over his breast. As he did so, he burst into tears, and when, soon after, he left the hospital, they were still streaming down his cheeks.

## THREE TERRORS

"One day, shortly before the issue of the Emancipation Proclamation, a visitor, finding Mr. Lincoln evidently in melancholy mood, said to him, 'Mr. President, I am very sorry to find you not feeling so well as at my last visit.'

"Mr. Lincoln replied: 'Yes, I am troubled. One day the best of our friends from the border States come in and insist that I shall not issue an Emancipation Proclamation, and that, if I do so, the border States will virtually cast in their lot with the Southern Confederacy. Another day, Charles Sumner, Thad Stevens, and Ben Wade come in and insist that if I do not issue such a proclamation the North will be utterly discouraged and the Union wrecked—and, by the way, these three men are coming in this very afternoon.' At this moment his expression changed, his countenance lighted up, and he said to the visitor, who was from the West, 'Mr. —, did you ever go to a prairie school?'

"'No,' said the visitor, 'I never did.'

"'Well,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'I did, and it was a very poor school, and we were very poor folks—too poor to have regular reading books, and so we brought our Bibles and read from them. One morning the chapter was from the Book of Daniel, and a little boy who sat next me went all wrong in pronouncing the names of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. The teacher had great difficulty in setting him right, and before he succeeded was obliged to scold the boy and cuff him for his stupidity. The next verse came to me, and so the chapter went along down the class. Presently it started on its way back, and soon after I noticed that the little fellow began crying. On this I asked him, 'What's the matter with you?' and he answered, 'Don't you see? Them three miserable cusses are coming back to me again!'"<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Autobiography of Andrew D. White, Vol. II., p. 127.

**FRANKLY CONFESSED HIS FAULT**

The following is from the pen of D. H. Mitchell: "Soon after the outbreak of hostilities a hot-blooded, fire-eating young man, a son of members of Dr. Gurley's church, in Washington, D. C., made his way through our lines and enlisted in the Confederate Army. The fortunes of war threw him into our hands as a prisoner. It was deemed best to make an example of him, and he was consequently court-martialed and sentenced to be shot. Dr. Gurley interested himself in the young man's behalf and secured a commutation of the sentence. A short time after, the father of the boy came to Dr. Gurley and solicited his aid to obtain a pardon. Dr. Gurley strongly advised against the effort. He pointed out that the young man's life had been saved by the President and that it would be extremely unwise and imprudent to apply for a pardon so soon. The father replied that he felt so himself, but that his wife took on so about her son that he feared she would lose her mind if something were not done. 'I must,' said he, 'make the attempt on his mother's account. It is better to fail than not to try.' Consequently Dr. Gurley signed the petition for a pardon and the father took it to President Lincoln.

"When the father made known his errand the President said with great earnestness: 'I saved the life of your son after he had been condemned to be shot; and now you come here so soon when you know I am overwhelmed with care and anxiety asking for his pardon. You should have been content with what I have done. Go; and if you annoy me any more I shall feel it my duty to consider whether I ought not to recall what I have already done.'

"A few days later the President sent for the father, apologized for the way he had spoken to him, and, to his utter astonishment, handed him a pardon.

"Not long after, and before knowing what had transpired, Dr. Gurley met the President. Having transacted his business,

he was about to go when Mr. Lincoln said: 'By the way, Doctor, you signed the petition for Mr. ——'s son's pardon, didn't you?'

"The Doctor replied that he had done so, but explained that he had advised against making the application at that time, and that he was induced to sign it only by the statement of the father that he feared his wife would lose her mind if something were not done to relieve her. The President then remarked: 'Well, Mr. —— came to me with the petition. It made me very angry and I dismissed him roughly. Afterward I felt so ashamed of myself for having lost my temper that I made out a pardon for the man and gave it to him.' And then, after a pause and with a broad smile, he added:

" 'Ah, Doctor! these wives of ours have the inside track on us, don't they?' "

### LINCOLN AT A SALOON DOOR

Rev. John Talmadge Bergen, D.D., relates the following, which at the present time is of special interest:

"Some years ago at a Lincoln meeting among the old soldiers of a Michigan city, one of the battle-worn veterans gave the following testimony: 'We have heard what Lincoln has done for all of us. I want to tell you what he did for me. I was a private in one of the western regiments that arrived first in Washington after the call for 75,000. We were marching through the city amid great crowds of cheering people, and then, after going into camp, were given leave to see the town.

" 'Like many other of our boys, the saloon or tavern was the first thing we hit. With my comrade I was just about to go into the door of one of these places, when a hand was laid upon my arm, and looking up, there was President Lincoln from his great height above me, a mere lad, regarding me with those kindly eyes and pleasant smile.

" 'I almost dropped with surprise and bashfulness, but he

held out his hand, and as I took it he shook hands in strong Western fashion and said: "I don't like to see our uniform going into these places." That was all he said. He turned immediately, and walked away and we passed on. We would not have gone into that tavern for all the wealth of Washington City.

"'And that is what Abraham Lincoln did then and there for me. He fixed me so that whenever I go near a saloon and in any way think of entering, his words and face come back to me. That experience has been a means of salvation to my life. Today I hate the saloon, and have hated it ever since I heard those words from that great man.'"

### CLEAN HANDS

One day a stranger called to secure Lincoln's services. "State your case," said Lincoln. A history of the case was given, when Lincoln astonished him by saying, "I cannot serve you, for you are wrong, and the other party is right."

"That is none of your business, if I hire and pay you for taking the case," said the man.

"Not my business!" exclaimed Lincoln. "My business is never to defend wrong, even if I am a lawyer. I never undertake a case that is manifestly wrong."

"Not for any amount of pay?" continued the stranger.

"Not for all you are worth," replied Lincoln.—*H. H. Smith, Kinsale, Va.*

### SHOT THROUGH HIS HAT

John W. Nichols, President Lincoln's bodyguard at the Soldiers' Home, near Washington, gives the following account of the President's narrow escape from assassination in August, 1864:

"One night I was doing sentry duty at the large gate through which entrance was had to the grounds of the Soldiers' Home, near Washington, where Mr. Lincoln spent much time

in summer. About eleven o'clock I heard a rifle-shot in the direction of the city, and shortly afterwards I heard approaching hoof-beats. In two or three minutes a horse came dashing up, and I recognized the belated President. The horse he rode was a very spirited one, and was Mr. Lincoln's saddle horse. As horse and rider approached the gate, I noticed that the President was bareheaded. As soon as I had assisted him in checking his steed, the President said to me: 'He came pretty near getting away with me, didn't he? He got the bit in his teeth before I could draw the rein.'

"I then asked him where his hat was; and he replied that somebody had fired a gun off down at the foot of the hill, and that his horse had become scared and had jerked his hat off. I led the animal to the Executive Cottage and the President dismounted and entered. Thinking the affair rather strange, a corporal and myself started off to investigate. When we reached the place whence the sound of the shot had come—a point where the driveway intersects with the main road—we found the President's hat. It was a plain, silk hat, and upon examination we discovered a bullet-hole through the crown. We searched the locality thoroughly, but without avail. Next day I gave Mr. Lincoln his hat, and called his attention to the bullet-hole. He made some humorous remark, to the effect that it was made by some foolish marksman and was not intended for him; but added that he wished nothing said about the matter. We all felt confident that it was an attempt to kill the President, and after that he never rode alone."

### COURAGEOUS FIDELITY

Hon. Joshua R. Giddings by his forceful personality, superior intellectual endowments, physical and moral courage, and undeviating loyalty to freedom, attained first place among the antislavery leaders of the period preceding the election of Abraham Lincoln as President in 1860. His twenty years'

services as a member of Congress from the famous Western Reserve district in Ohio, and his many heroic battles with the pro-slavery forces in Congress and elsewhere, gave peculiar weight to an amendment of the platform proposed by him in the Chicago convention declaring that "all men are created equal." That amendment, however, after discussion, was disapproved of by the convention as unnecessary, to the regret of those who favored it, and especially of Mr. Giddings, who expressed his disappointment and displeasure by withdrawing from the convention.

But before he left the Wigwam, in which the convention was held, the veteran antislavery champion was overtaken and informed that under the leadership of George William Curtis the convention had revised its decision and adopted his amendment. This action was a great joy to Mr. Giddings, who thereupon returned and resumed his seat as a delegate in the convention, which on the following day nominated Abraham Lincoln as its candidate for President.

All this was made a matter of record, but not until after Mr. Lincoln's death was it generally known that he, though at Springfield, was a participant in the efforts to secure the adoption of the Giddings amendment. Immediately after the defeat of that amendment, a telegram was sent Mr. Lincoln, saying: "Convention has just voted down the Giddings amendment. What can we do?"

To this Mr. Lincoln promptly replied: "Party rejecting the principles of the Declaration of Independence will go to pieces. Have a recess, reconsider amendment. Time and reflection will restore men's reason and bring better judgment." This message from Mr. Lincoln was in the hall when Mr. Curtis finished his speech for the amendment and as the crisis seemed to be passed it was not presented. It was, however, a fine illustration of Mr. Lincoln's courageous fidelity to his convictions.

**REFUSED TO PLEDGE**

Quite as illustrative as the foregoing, of Mr. Lincoln's great courage and wisdom, is the following from the Hon. John B. Alley, a prominent member of Congress from Massachusetts:

"The evening before the balloting in the Chicago convention, a telegram was sent Mr. Lincoln by his trusted friends in Chicago, stating that his chances for securing the nomination depended upon the votes of two delegations in the convention which were named in the dispatch, and that to secure this support he must pledge himself, if elected, to give places in his Cabinet to the heads of those delegations.

"Mr. Lincoln immediately replied: 'I authorize no bargains and will be bound by none.' "

**SEEKS FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER WITH BEECHER**

Mr. Samuel Scoville, Jr., of Philadelphia, a grandson of Henry Ward Beecher, is responsible for the following, which he received from his grandmother, Mr. Beecher's widow:

"Following the disaster of Bull Run, when the strength and resources of the nation seemed to have been wasted, the hopes of the North were at their lowest ebb, and Mr. Lincoln was well-nigh overwhelmed with the awful responsibility of guiding the nation in its life struggle. Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn, was perhaps more prominently associated with the cause of the North at that time than any other minister of the gospel. He had preached and lectured and fought its battles in pulpit and press all over the country, had ransomed slaves from his pulpit, and his convictions and feelings were everywhere known.

"Late one evening a stranger called at the home of Mr. Beecher and asked to see him. Mr. Beecher was working alone in his study, as was his custom, and this stranger refused to send up his name, and came muffled in a military cloak

which completely hid his face. Mrs. Beecher's suspicions were aroused, and she was very unwilling that he should have the interview which he requested, especially as Mr. Beecher's life had been frequently threatened by sympathizers with the South. The latter, however, insisted that his visitor be shown up. Accordingly, the stranger entered, the doors were shut, and for hours the wife below could hear their voices and their footsteps as they paced back and forth. Finally, toward midnight, the mysterious visitor went out, still muffled in his cloak, so that it was impossible to gain any idea of his features.

"The years went by, the war was finished, the President had suffered martyrdom at his post, and it was not until shortly before Mr. Beecher's death, over twenty years later, that he made known that the mysterious stranger who had called on that stormy night was Abraham Lincoln. The stress and strain of those days and nights of struggle, with all the responsibilities and sorrows of a nation fighting for its life resting upon him, had broken his strength, and for a time undermined his courage. He had traveled alone in disguise and at night from Washington to Brooklyn, to gain the sympathy and help of one whom he knew as a man of God, engaged in the same great battle in which he was the leader. Alone for hours that night, like Jacob of old, the two had wrestled together in prayer with the God of battles and the Watcher over the right until they had received the help which He had promised to those that seek His aid."

This story has been vigorously denied and as vigorously defended. That it was originally told by Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher cannot be questioned. Mr. Scoville, who first published it, declares that in his opinion it is true, and Dr. William J. Johnson, author of "Abraham Lincoln—the Christian," informed me that after thorough investigation he fully believed it to be authentic and truthful.

This seemingly strange event in Mr. Lincoln's life is in perfect accord with his religious belief and his deeper spiritual



HENRY WARD BEECHER

With whom President Lincoln sought fellowship in prayer.



nature. That profound sense of dependence upon God and faith in prayer which he expressed so many times and with such clearness, caused him, as already stated, to solicit callers at the White House whom he held in especially high esteem, like Bishops Simpson and Janes, Major Merwin and others, to kneel with him in supplication and prayer.

And apart from the journey from Washington to Brooklyn, this event related by Mrs. Beecher was not unlike those requests for prayer in the Executive Mansion. Mr. Lincoln's well known regard for Henry Ward Beecher would certainly cause him to yearn for his companionship at the altar of intercession at a time of great and peculiar national peril. Mr. Beecher's early and heroic espousal of the antislavery cause and his matchless eloquence in denouncing slavery attracted Mr. Lincoln's attention and awakened his admiration before he had himself become widely known. He was a constant reader of *The Independent* while Mr. Beecher was its editor, and on both of the Sundays he spent in New York during his Cooper Institute and New England speaking tour, he crossed over to Brooklyn to hear Beecher preach.

During his Presidency, Mr. Lincoln very earnestly besought Beecher, during a contemplated European trip, to make a series of addresses in England on behalf of the great struggle to preserve the Union. This request Mr. Beecher at first declined, but at length accepted, performing the task assigned him in a manner unparalleled in human history.

And so high was Mr. Lincoln's estimate of Beecher's oratorical powers and his appreciation of his services to the nation and to the cause of human freedom that when the flag was to be restored to Fort Sumter, the President made special request that the great preacher be chosen to deliver the address upon that important occasion. It is, therefore, reasonable that when overwhelmed by a realization of the nation's perils, the great Chieftain should quietly seek the seclusion of the upper chamber in Brooklyn to spend a season in prayer with

the man of God whom he held in such high esteem and for whom he cherished such ardent personal affection.

Upon the scene of this unique event there rests a halo of celestial beauty too sacred to be regarded with indifference or doubt.

#### **A SLAVE-MOTHER'S PRAYER**

The following from the late Dr. Booker T. Washington is peculiarly interesting and pathetic: "My first knowledge of Abraham Lincoln came in this way: I was awakened early one morning before the dawn of day, as I lay wrapped in a bundle of rags on the dirt floor of our slave cabin, by the prayers of my mother. It was just before she left for her day's work and she was kneeling over me earnestly praying that Abraham Lincoln might succeed and that one day she and her boy might be free."

#### **A SCOFFER WEEPS**

Dr. Edward Eggleston, in the following, tells how a jolly friend of Mr. Lincoln in Springfield succeeded in bantering him about an event that occurred while he was in New York City to deliver the Cooper Institute speech:

"He started for 'Old Abe's' office, but bursting open the door impulsively, found a stranger in conversation with Mr. Lincoln. He turned to retrace his steps, when Lincoln called out, 'Jim! what do you want?' 'Nothing.' 'Yes, you do; come back.'

"After some entreaty, 'Jim' approached Mr. Lincoln, and remarked with a twinkle in his eye, 'Well, Abe, I see you have been making a speech to Sunday School children. What's the matter?'

"'Sit down, Jim, and I'll tell you all about it. When Sunday morning came, I didn't know exactly what to do. Mr. Washburne asked me where I was going. I told him I had nowhere to go; and he proposed to take me down to the Five Points Sunday School, to show me something worth seeing. I

was very much interested by what I saw. Presently Mr. Pease came up and spoke to Mr. Washburne, who introduced me. Mr. Pease wanted us to speak. Washburne spoke, and then I was urged to speak. I told them I did not know anything about talking to Sunday Schools, but Mr. Pease said many of the children were friendless and homeless, and that a few words would do them good. Washburne said I must talk. And so I rose to speak; but I tell you, Jim, I didn't know what to say. I remembered that Mr. Pease said they were homeless and friendless, and I thought of the time when I had been pinched by terrible poverty. And so I told them that I had been poor; that I remembered when my toes stuck out through my broken shoes in winter; when my arms were out at the elbows; when I shivered with the cold. And I told them there was only one rule; that was, always to do the very best you can. I told them that I had always tried to do the very best I could; and that, if they would follow that rule, they would get along, somehow. That was about what I said. And when I got through, Mr. Pease said it was just the thing they needed. And when the school was dismissed, all the teachers came up and shook hands with me, and thanked me; although I did not know that I had been saying anything of any account.

“But the next morning I saw my remarks noticed in the papers.’ Just here Mr. Lincoln put his hand in his pocket, and remarked that he had never heard anything that touched him as had the songs which those children sang. With that he drew forth a little book, saying that they had given him one of the books from which they sang. He began to read a piece with all the earnestness of his great, earnest soul. In the middle of the second verse his friend ‘Jim’ felt a choking in his throat and a tickling in his nose. At the beginning of the third verse he saw that the stranger was weeping, and his own tears fell fast. Turning toward Lincoln, who was reading straight on, he saw the great, blinding tears in his eyes, so that he could not possibly see the pages. He was

repeating that little song from memory. How often he had read it, or how long its sweet and simple accents continued to reverberate through his soul, no one can know."

### ROOT, HOG, OR DIE!

The following story is just as Lincoln told it but not as it is usually published.

The morning after the return of President Lincoln and Secretary Seward from their conference with the Confederate Commissioners at Hampton Roads, General James M. Ashley, Congressman from Ohio, called at the White House and found Mr. Lincoln in exuberant spirits. The President held General Ashley in high esteem and was always very free with him in conversation. Hence, on that February morning, after the President's return from Hampton Roads, he talked with unrestrained freedom to the Ohio Congressman respecting the Hampton Roads affair.

Within an hour after his delightful interview with the President, General Ashley was in his office in the Capitol and gave to me, his private secretary, a full account of what had taken place between the President and him. Many times during the half century that has passed since then have I thought of the General's high glee as he rehearsed to me the statements made by Mr. Lincoln. But especially gleeful was he, when he suddenly sprang from his chair, and said:

"And 'Old Abe' told them a story, and it was the best of anything I have heard for many a day." And then, that he might be at his best, for he was himself a famous storyteller, he remained standing, his magnificent form being repeatedly convulsed with laughter as he dramatically told, fresh from the President's lips, the story he had by strong persuasion prevailed upon him to relate. That story as it was then given to me and carefully noted down at the time, is as follows:

In all the negotiations at Hampton Roads the Confederate



DAVID R. LOCKE

Whose humorous Nasby writings were read and greatly enjoyed by President Lincoln. The copy of the Nasby book which the President read, was given to Mr. Locke after Lincoln's death with "A. Lincoln" written many times upon its paper cover. From a photograph by Brady taken in the author's presence, and now in his collection.



Commissioners wrought with tireless diligence to secure terms of peace without any interference with the institution of slavery. Respecting this, Mr. Lincoln was unyielding and stated that not one word of the Emancipation Proclamation could be retracted, and that Congress had just voted by the requisite two-thirds majority to submit to the several states a constitutional amendment, which, if adopted, by three-fourths of the states, as he was very sure it would be, would forever prohibit slavery in the nation.

At this point, Mr. Hunter of Virginia, one of the Confederate Commissioners, interrupted the President by saying: "There is one feature of this matter which I fear the Government and the people of the United States do not properly appreciate. They should remember, as they seem not to do, that the white people of the South never have been accustomed to manual labor. They have not the physical strength and power of endurance to perform such labor, and they have no knowledge of the methods by which a living can be secured by handicraft of any kind. Now, if their slaves are taken from them, those Negroes, thus suddenly freed, would not be willing, at any reasonable price if at all, to become the hired servants of the people who had owned and controlled them as slaves. What then would become of this great population of high-spirited white people of the South? How could they subsist if their slaves are taken from them?"

Mr. Lincoln remained silent that this argument might be answered by his Secretary of State. But as Mr. Seward seemed unable successfully to meet this new and seemingly strong objection, the President said:

"I do not pretend, Mr. Hunter, to know conditions in the South nearly as well as they are known by you, but what you say reminds me of an incident that occurred quite a number of years ago in Illinois. A farmer there by the name of Case, who was ambitious to raise a large number of hogs, decided to fatten his porkers upon turnips instead of corn. He, therefore, at a time when his turnips were full grown and juicy,

turned his herd of hogs into the large field and permitted them to eat without restraint. This worked finely and saved the farmer the trouble and expense of harvesting the turnips and of feeding them to the hogs.

"One day, as he was standing watching what was going on in the field of turnips, a neighbor came along and said: 'This looks very well now, Mr. Case, but you must remember that winter comes early, and the ground freezes as hard as a rock, twelve inches or more in depth. Then, what are the hogs going to do?'

"This was a phase of the matter which Mr. Case had not considered, and dropping his head as if in deep meditation, he remained silent for a brief time and then with emphasis replied: 'Well, it may be hard on their snouts, but I guess it will have to be root, hog, or die!'

This story was effective in settling that question with those commissioners, and also in producing a feeling of exultation among the loyal people to whom it soon became known.

I never saw General Ashley laugh with greater heartiness and abandon than when he related this story to me in his office just after it had been given to him by the President. And the story spread like a prairie fire, and was greeted with great gratification and merriment by the people of strong anti-slavery sentiments. Many times did I hear it told, and it was always received by peals of laughter.

Unfortunately, as I think, for history and for the effectiveness of this characteristic exhibition of Mr. Lincoln's force and exhaustless fund of illustration, this story has been so changed as to cause Mr. Hunter's expression of solicitude to be for the colored people of the South, who, always having been cared for by their masters, as Mr. Hunter is reported to have said, would be unable properly to live without such care. But this change is false to history and causes the whole scene, including the illustration itself, to appear flat and insignificant. Strange indeed would it have been for Mr. Hunter to present such a plea for the colored people by whose

toil the white population had been supported and made rich. Stranger still would it have been for Mr. Seward, the ready and resourceful debater, to be silenced by such an argument instead of being aroused instantly to an expression of confidence in the ability of the colored people to provide for their own needs since they had wrought so effectively for the support and wealth of their masters.

And most remarkable of all would it have been for Mr. Lincoln to have replied to a slave holder's plea for the continuance of slavery by a story at the expense of the Negro slaves. It was, however, characteristic of Mr. Lincoln thus to turn the tables upon those with whom he was in argument, and this story was part of an argument he was holding with a white advocate of slavery. Because Mr. Hunter's plea was for the white people of the South who would be helpless, as he claimed, without their slaves, the story was overwhelming in its effect and closed the consideration of the slavery question. When applied as it was to those who, it was claimed, would not be competent to provide for their needs without the aid of the Negro slaves, the story was true to the facts in the case; slave holders were unaccustomed to manual labor and were unschooled in such work. It was unusually severe for Mr. Lincoln, yet not discourteous, but it would have been cruel if Mr. Hunter's plea had been for the colored slaves, who were not represented at that conference and were not themselves asking for any favors save the freedom which had been promised them by the voluntary action of the government. Doubly cruel would that story have been if it had been applied to the colored slaves, every one of whom, as far as known, was loyal and true to the Union during all the years of the Civil War, and tens of thousands of whom had fought heroically in the Union army.

Mr. Lincoln's story derived peculiar force from the fact that the slave-holding population of the South had come to regard labor as degrading, and some of their leaders had characterized laboring people, whether black or white, as the

"mud-sills of society." This was indignantly resented by the people of the North who at the time this story was told by Mr. Lincoln would not have relished any joke at the expense of the colored slaves, but were greatly pleased to have the President so effectively remind the slave holders of the divine decree that man should eat bread in the sweat of his own face. There was at that time intense feeling on this subject and the antislavery people were happy at the prospect of such a change of conditions as would require all to toil or suffer want.

It was this which caused the story to be so popular at the time and to produce such merriment wherever it was read or related; and I am more than happy to have preserved it in its original form and to hand it on as an authentic contribution to the history of that crisis period. I have not the slightest inclination to say aught that will reflect unfavorably upon those who were formerly yoked with the institution of slavery, many of whom were unwillingly connected with that institution, having inherited slaves from their ancestors, and many of whom sought to be helpful to their slaves in morality and religion. But I have long felt that this story-argument by President Lincoln should go into history in the form in which it was first given to the public and in the form in which it has significance and force.

#### **A PATCHWORK QUILT—HOW IT ANSWERED LINCOLN'S PRAYER**

On a clear, cold Christmas morning, before the election of Abraham Lincoln as President, young David Durand awakened in his New England home to find his bed covered by an exquisitely beautiful patchwork quilt, made by his mother, and by her spread upon his bed while he was asleep. It was a Christmas gift to her beloved boy, and after that morning it was always on his bed in the old home.

The blocks of the quilt were of uniform pattern, but the

small pieces of which those blocks were composed were of great variety of color, figure and combination. Young Durand was peculiarly fond of this quilt, which always reminded him of his loving mother's solicitude for him. It was the last object seen by him at night, and the first that greeted his vision when the morning came. He admired the skill with which the small fragments of many garments had been, by dextrous needlework, formed into shapely blocks, which, in like manner, were united to produce this cherished covering for his bed.

He noted the chaste and æsthetic association of colors, and the pleasing harmony which prevailed throughout the quilt, and thus in his receptive nature this product of his mother's industry and skill became a potent factor for his growth and culture in the highest qualities of worthy manhood. It aided him to appreciate her rare domestic genius and accomplishments; to call to mind and meditate upon her loving ministrations; to realize the cost and value of his earthly comforts, and to cherish an exalted purpose to be worthy of his priceless heritage. In the quiet of the evening hour, and in the darkness of the night, that patchwork quilt was more than a needed and appreciated covering for his bed, it was a silent evangel of God to his expanding soul.

But when the great war came, David responded to the call for troops, and as a member of the 10th Connecticut Volunteers he quickly reached the front and entered upon the hardships and dangers of army life.

When the magnitude and severity of the struggle came to be realized it was discovered that the Government, suddenly called to defend the nation's life, could not by existing methods provide for all the needs of sick and wounded soldiers and sailors, and hence in June, 1861, the Sanitary Commission was organized to supplement the work of the United States Medical Bureau. It was supported by money and supplies contributed by the people of every loyal state in the Union. It had its own independent system of transportation and was

able to provide for emergencies on battlefields and in hospitals in advance of any relief which the Government could afford.

To one of the directors of this beneficent organization, President Lincoln gave the following account of its origin: "One rainy night I could not sleep; the wounds of the soldiers and sailors distressed me; their pains pierced my heart, and I asked God to show me how they could have better relief. After wrestling some time in prayer, He put the plans of the Sanitary Commission in my mind, and they have been carried out pretty much as God gave them to me that night."

Soon after David's enlistment an agent of this Commission called at his Connecticut home to solicit contributions for the Army and Navy Hospitals. The hearts of his parents were made especially responsive to this call by remembrance of their own soldier-boy, and one of their contributions was the patchwork quilt which they took from David's bed, and sent forth upon its mission of loving ministration.

"It is hard to part with that quilt," said Mrs. Durand, "for it is a constant reminder of David. It was always on his bed and he seemed to love it dearly. I shall miss it, especially when I am in his room, but it will do more good in the Army Hospitals than here and I will make another quilt for David, when he comes home."

Without any request as to where it should be sent, without any thought of such a request, these godly parents, with some hesitation it is true, but with Christian cheerfulness, took that cherished quilt and sent it forth with the prayer that, under God, it might be helpful to some suffering soldier as it had given joy and comfort to the beloved one who had gone out from his home at his country's call. And He, "who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," heard the prayer that silently arose from that mother's heart, and Christmas morning, 1862, in an Army Hospital away down in Newbern, North Carolina, David awakened from a feverish sleep to find himself lying beneath the patch-

work quilt which for years had covered his bed at home. For a time he was bewildered by this seeming apparition. He remembered that during the preceding day his illness was attended by delirium, and he was apprehensive that what he saw was not reality, but only a mental vision which investigation would speedily dispel.

With quick and nervous movements he sat erect in bed, and seizing the beautiful covering in his hands, closely scanned each block only to be assured that it was none other than the quilt his mother made and spread upon his bed that Christmas morning long ago. There was the block composed of pieces from the dresses his mother wore, and near by, in like arrangement, were the familiar fragments of his sister's prints and plaids. And there, also, too unique ever to be forgotten or duplicated, was the block his dear old grandmother had "pieced" from materials she had selected for her own attire. Each block in the quilt was a valid mark of identification, and trembling with intense excitement he called the hospital steward and said, "Where did you get this quilt?"

Observing his excitement, the steward calmly answered, "I got it in the storeroom where such supplies are kept. Why do you ask?"

"I ask," the agitated soldier almost shouted, "because this quilt was made by my mother for my bed at home. It is the very same one. I know it is. The last night I spent at home I slept under it as I had done for years, and when I left for the front this quilt was on my bed in Derby, Connecticut. How, then, did it come to be here, in this Army Hospital, hundreds of miles from my home, and how did it come to be here on my cot? Was it sent to me? And did you, knowing it was mine, have it spread upon my cot while I was asleep? Tell me, please, how did it all come about?"

But the steward could give no satisfactory answers to these questions which came in rapid succession, like shots from a repeating rifle. The quilt, he said, had come with other supplies contributed by the people, and without any

knowledge of its history, it had been placed upon that cot, when, on the preceding day, David was admitted to the hospital. Beyond that, the steward could give him no information.

But He who said, "Cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days," knew all about it.

And for some great and good purpose of His own, He had taken from that mother's trembling hands her contribution to the Sanitary Commission, and by process of His own choosing, had conveyed it all the way from Connecticut to that Army Hospital. And during the night preceding that Christmas morning He had caused the quilt to be spread upon the cot on which that mother's fever-stricken and delirious boy was sleeping.

It was a little opening in the curtains that conceals from view the infinite realm in which are constantly conducted the operations by which the grace of God ministers to human needs. There is just enough of such disclosures of Divine oversight to give assurance that in all things, and at all times, our heavenly Father is caring for His children and is making more effective than we have dared to hope, all our efforts to promote His cause and to help our fellowmen.

After his brief illness, young Durand informed his parents that he had discovered his favorite quilt in an Army Hospital, and asked if they could explain its being there. To this letter his father made prompt reply, as follows:

"You speak of seeing a bed-quilt at the Hospital that you thought you knew. Most likely, for your mother gave a quilt, a woollen blanket, a pair of sheets, and some table-cloths for old linen. The quilt was the one you used to sleep under at home. It must have looked like an old friend in a strange land."

### HIS LAST PICTURE

"About the last of February, 1865, Mr. H. F. Warren, a photographer of Waltham, Mass., left home, intending, if

practicable, to visit the army in front of Richmond and Petersburg. Arriving in Washington on the morning of the 4th of March, and finding it necessary to procure passes to carry out the end he had in view, he concluded to remain there until the inauguration ceremonies were over, and, having carried with him all the apparatus necessary for taking negatives, he decided to try to secure a sitting from the President.

"At that time rumors of plots and dangers had caused the friends of President Lincoln to urge upon him the necessity of a guard, and, as he had finally permitted the presence of such a body, an audience with him was somewhat difficult. On the afternoon of the 6th of March, Mr. Warren sought a presentation to Mr. Lincoln, but found, after consulting with the guard, that an interview could be had on that day in only a somewhat irregular manner. After some conversation with the officer in charge, who became convinced of his loyalty, Mr. Warren was admitted within the lines, and, at the same time, was given to understand that the surest way to obtain an audience with the President was through the intercession of his little son 'Tad.' The latter was a great pet with the soldiers, and was constantly at their barracks, and soon made his appearance, mounted upon his pony. He and the pony were soon placed in position and photographed, after which Mr. Warren asked 'Tad' to tell his father that a man had come all the way from Boston, and was particularly anxious to see him and obtain a sitting from him. 'Tad' went to see his father, and word was soon returned that Mr. Lincoln would comply. In the meantime Mr. Warren had improvised a kind of studio upon the south balcony of the White House. Mr. Lincoln soon came out, and saying but a very few words, took his seat as indicated. After a single negative was taken, he inquired: 'Is that all, sir?' Unwilling to detain him longer than was absolutely necessary, Mr. Warren replied, 'Yes, sir,' and the President immediately withdrew. At the time he appeared upon the balcony the wind was blowing freshly, as his disarranged hair indicates,

and, as sunset was rapidly approaching, it was difficult to obtain a sharp picture. Six weeks later Mr. Lincoln was dead, and it is doubtless true that this is the last photograph ever made of him.”\*

In no picture of Mr. Lincoln which I have seen is there more expression than in this, but it is expression peculiar to this photograph. It reveals his feelings at the time the negative was taken, not irritation but repressed regret at having been interrupted and taken away from work. The poise of his head, his knit brows, and piercing eye all indicate the feelings of a busy man yielding reluctantly to a request he is unwilling to refuse. Dear little “Tad!” we are indebted to him for this priceless picture.

### ONE LETTER WRONG

Abraham Lincoln was first inaugurated President on the 4th of March, 1861. During the winter preceding that event he prepared, at Springfield, with very great care, his exceedingly able inaugural address which effectively forecast his entire administration and left those who were enlisting in rebellion no excuse for the course they were pursuing. He also called a special session of Congress to meet on the Fourth of July following his inauguration. A brief message outlining the immediate needs of the government was presented at that special session.

The regular annual meeting of Congress occurred on the 3rd of December, 1861, and to this session of Congress the President presented his first regular message. There was a fact connected with this message which seemed, at the time, to attract very little attention, but it is so peculiar and suggestive that in my opinion it should have a place in history. It would be difficult for one not living in this country at that time to realize the extent to which strife and contention prevailed among loyal people of the nation during the period

\* Century Magazine, Vol. 2, p. 852.

between the President's inauguration on the 4th of March and the presentation of his first regular message to Congress in December.

Early in an administration many appointments to office are made by the President. This always leads to contention and strife, and at the time referred to this contention was far greater than usual, for, with the change of Presidents, there was also a change of the party in power which leads to the removal of many who were holding office, and of the filling of their places by others in harmony with the administration. During the period referred to, the Rebellion was in progress and caused sharp differences of opinion among the loyal people. In addition to this there was a nation-wide and constantly growing struggle between the radical and conservative wings of the party in power respecting the policy which should be pursued by the government concerning the institution of slavery.

There were some who at that time believed the administration should at once resort to extreme measures for the immediate destruction of slavery as a righteous retribution for a great wrong and also as a means for the preservation of the nation. The other wing of the party was in heart and spirit opposed to slavery but feared that any action of the government against that institution would divide the loyal people and endanger the preservation of the Union.

From earliest recollection I had been an ardent abolitionist, therefore my sympathies were with the radical portion of the loyal people. But I was always a devoted friend and admirer of Abraham Lincoln and fully believed, and openly declared that, as early as was safe to do so, he would pursue the course we desired. But my opposition to slavery was so pronounced that I was in close party fellowship with the radicals, attending their special meetings, and thus being kept constantly informed respecting their plans relative to slavery.

During all that summer and autumn it was hoped that in his forthcoming regular message President Lincoln would

make known his policy upon this subject, and well do I remember with what impatience I waited for the appearance of that message, and with what a degree of interest I secured and read a copy telegraphed to the papers throughout the nation on the day it was presented to Congress. In those days the President's message, when delivered to Congress, was telegraphed to the newspapers throughout the country and was by those papers published with more or less fullness the next day. After it had been delivered to Congress a printed copy of the message was also mailed to the newspapers throughout the country, and when it was received was helpful in correcting any errors which might have crept into the copy which previously had been sent by wire.

The next day after that message was presented to Congress I secured a paper at my Ohio home containing the full text of the message as sent by wire to the newspapers. With intense interest I at once gave attention to this important document, and in so doing soon found the following:

"We should not be in haste to determine what radical and extreme measures which may reach the loyal as well as the disloyal, are indispensable."

Many times I read this passage with inexpressible delight assured that it could not be less than an implied declaration by the President that "radical and extreme measures" were or would be needed, but that "we should not be in haste to determine" what measures of that character to choose. Of course, we were expected to employ "radical and extreme measures," or the government would not thus proclaim its purpose to select such measures with care and deliberation. In my exuberance of spirits I could see slavery speedily vanish under such a wise and timely policy.

But all this depended upon just one letter remaining in the place it occupied in the portion of that message above quoted. To substitute for that one letter another letter which might be chosen would change the policy of the administration from radical to conservative, and would cause our vision

of the immediate and utter overthrow of slavery to vanish like a dream.

And that is just what occurred. The correct message, when it appeared a few days later, printed just as President Lincoln wrote it with "t" occupying the place which the telegraph operator assigned to "w," thereby changed "what" to "that," and indicated that President Lincoln would not "be in haste" to commit the government to the emancipation policy.

I can feel today painful remnants of the disappointment I experienced when my high hopes of an immediate declaration of emancipation were thus dashed to the ground. It was not long, however, until it became evident to the most radical of Mr. Lincoln's supporters that he was pursuing the wise and proper course.

On page 52, Volume VII., Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, is the sentence here referred to. Many times during the last five decades I have spoken of the remarkable error in its first publication, and no one to whom I ever have mentioned the matter had any previous knowledge of the occurrence. Such an error could not now occur in the publication of a regular message of the President, as that document is now sent in printed form to the newspapers in advance, and is released for publication when it is presented to Congress. The magnitude of the task of transmitting the message by telegraph, as was formerly the custom, is indicated by the following from the New York *Tribune* of March 5th, 1861:

"The manner in which President Lincoln's (first) inaugural was transmitted by telegraph is deserving special commendation. The American Telegraph Company, under the able management of E. S. Sanford, Esq., vice-president, placed at the disposal of the Associated Press three wires between Washington and this city. The delivery of the inaugural commenced at 1:30 o'clock Washington time, and the telegraphers promptly to the minute began its transmission

to New York. The first words of the message were received by the agent of the press here at 1:45 o'clock and the last at about three thirty, while the entire document was furnished to the different newspapers by 4:00 o'clock. Such rapidity in telegraphic communication has never before been reached in this country, and it should be a source of pride to the American Company, and its president and operators, that so notable an act has been accomplished. We understand that a full synopsis of the inaugural was yesterday evening transmitted to St. Johns, N. F., thence to be forwarded by steam tug to intercept the Steamship Fulton, bound to Europe, off Cape Race."

### LINCOLN'S CHASTENESS IN CONVERSATION

Major Hay and Mr. Nicolay, Mr. Lincoln's secretaries, were members of his household during a large portion of his official term—Mr. Carpenter, the artist, lived in the White House during six months—Professor Henry sought every opportunity to be with him, and these four witnesses, who saw him in his unconstrained private life, agree that neither of them heard from Mr. Lincoln's lips any sentence or word which might not have been repeated in the presence of ladies. The subject is one upon which I can give evidence. It was a great pleasure to me to listen to him, and I have several times sought to excite his propensity for anecdote with success. In my own office, where no one but a messenger was present, he was under no restraint. Yet I never heard him relate a story or utter a sentence which I could not have repeated to my wife and daughters—*L. E. Chittenden.*

### HIS FAVORITE SONG

In the winter of 1863 President Lincoln attended an anniversary meeting of the Christian Commission, held in the hall of the House of Representatives at Washington. With characteristic modesty he declined a seat on the platform, but

manifested deep interest in the proceedings. During the program Philip Phillips sang "Your Mission," a song very popular at that time. Near the close of the exercises the President quietly sent the presiding officer the following note: "Please have Mr. Phillips repeat the song—Your Mission. Do not say I called for it."

It was not my good fortune to be present on that occasion, but two years later I attended a similar affair and heard Mr. Phillips relate the foregoing incident while holding in his hands Mr. Lincoln's written request. Looking down at the reporters who sat before him, Mr. Phillips said to us, "Do not think you will get this, gentlemen of the press, for you will not. Copy it as I read it, if you wish, but you cannot have it at any price." We gladly accepted this invitation and the reader here has the note just as it was read by Mr. Phillips.

The following is the song referred to:

### YOUR MISSION

If you cannot on the ocean  
Sail among the swiftest fleet,  
Rocking on the highest billow,  
Laughing at the storms you meet,  
You can stand among the sailors,  
Anchored yet within the bay,  
You can lend a hand to help them,  
As they launch their boats away.

If you are too weak to journey  
Up the mountain, steep and high,  
You can stand within the valley,  
Where the multitudes go by.  
You can chant in happy measure,  
As they slowly pass along;  
Though they may forget the singer,  
They will not forget the song.

If you cannot, in the harvest,  
 Gather up the richest sheaves,  
 Many a grain both ripe and golden,  
 Oft the careless reaper leaves—  
 Go and glean among the briars  
 Growing rank against the wall,  
 For it may be that their shadow  
 Hides the heaviest wheat of all.

If you have not gold and silver  
 Ever ready to command;  
 If you cannot toward the needy  
 Reach an ever open hand;  
 You can visit the afflicted,  
 O'er the erring you can weep,  
 With the Saviour's true disciples,  
 You a patient watch may keep.

If you cannot in the conflict  
 Prove yourself a soldier true,  
 If where fire and smoke are thickest,  
 There's no work for you to do,  
 When the battlefield is silent,  
 You can go with careful tread,  
 You can bear away the wounded,  
 You can cover up the dead.

Do not, then, stand idly waiting  
 For some greater work to do;  
 Fortune is a lazy goddess,  
 She will never come to you.  
 Go and toil in any vineyard,  
 Do not fear to do or dare,  
 If you want a field of labor,  
 You can find it anywhere.

—*Mrs. Ellen Huntington Gates.*  
 English Hymns, 258.

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